UNKNOWN

Tsumuji Yoshimura

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UNKNOWN

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UNKNOWN
Tsumuji Yoshimura
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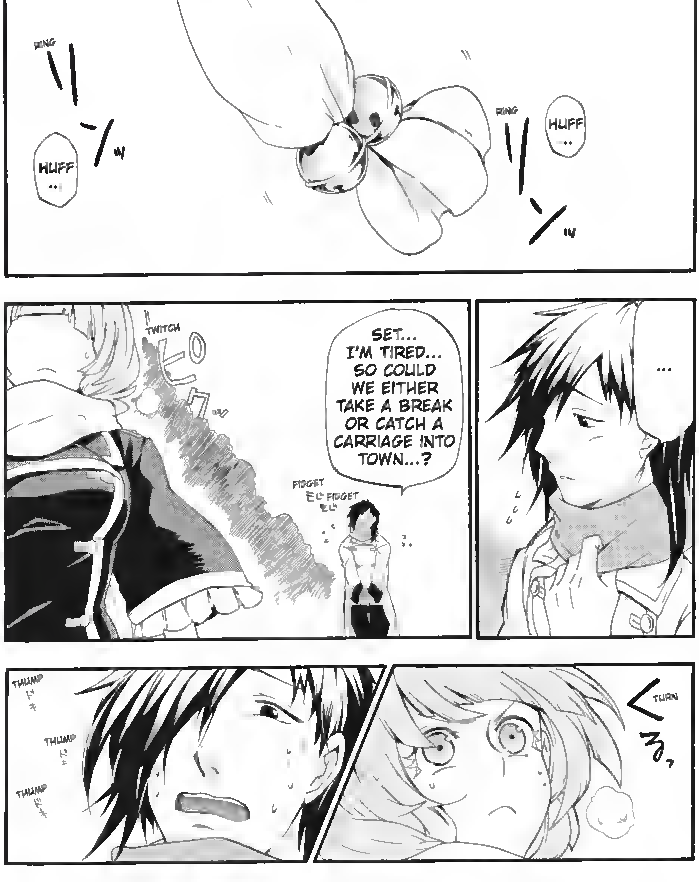
WHY DID WE HAVE TO COME TO THE MIDDLE OF NOWHERE?
THEY COULD HAVE JUST AS WELL SENT SOMEONE WITHOUT A TITLE...
OH, NOW. NOTHING WRONG WITH GETTING A LITTLE FRESH COUNTRY AIR.
RUSTLE
!
RUSTLE
BETTER FOR ME IF YOU STOP BREATHING ALTOGETHER.

Chapter 5:
The Beginning of Everything (Pandora)

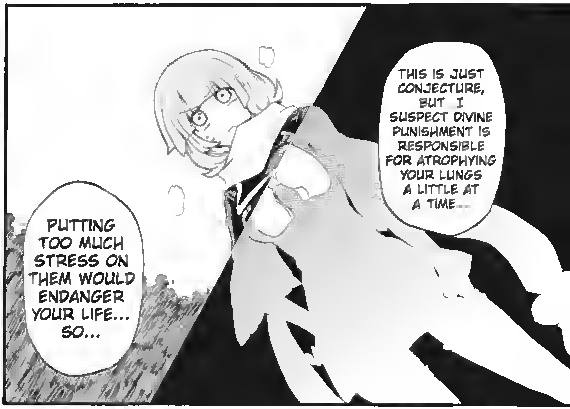

PING
HUFF...
PING
HUFF...
TWITCH
SET... I'M TIRED... SO COULD WE EITHER TAKE A BREAK OR CATCH A CARRIAGE INTO TOWN...?
FIDGET FIDGET
...
THUMP
THUMP
THUMP
TURN
YOU'RE A LOUSY LIAR!! DON'T EVEN BOTHER TRYING TO CON ME!
ULP...

I'M FINE. WE JUST TOOK A BREAK A LITTLE WHILE AGO...
...AND I'M NOT TIRED AT ALL.

M-MAYBE A NORMAL PERSON COULD HANDLE THIS TREK.. B-BUT YOU...
YOU TIRE OUT MORE EASILY THAN THE AVERAGE PERSON ..

B-BUT... I DON'T THINK IT'S GOOD TO OVERDO IT!
I'M NOT GIVING IN SO EASILY TODAY!
!

TCH!!

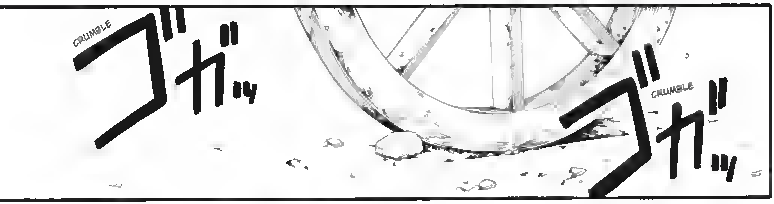

PUTTING TOO MUCH STRESS ON THEM WOULD ENDANGER YOUR LIFE... SO...
THIS IS JUST CONJECTURE, BUT I SUSPECT DIVINE PUNISHMENT IS RESPONSIBLE FOR ATROPHYING YOUR LUNGS A LITTLE AT A TIME...

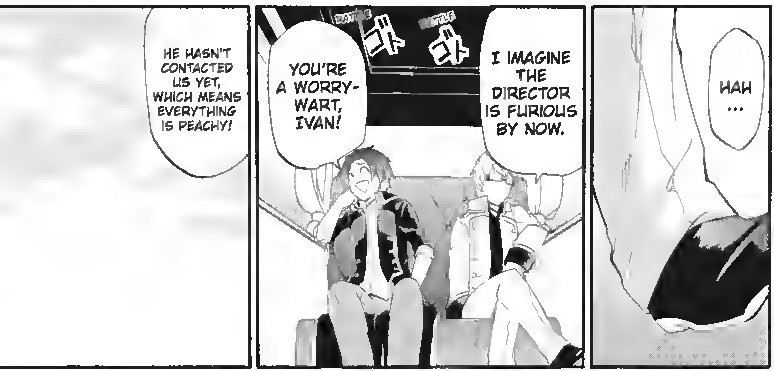
DON'T GIVE ME ANY SPECIAL TREATMENT !!!!
SORRY
AND ALSO!!
POINT
YIKES!
IF WE'RE TALKING MEDICAL CONDITIONS, YOU'RE NO DIFFERENT, NOAH!
EVEN IF IT'S NOT DIVINE PUNISHMENT, YOUR MUSCLES ARE DEFINITELY WEAKENING, SO IF YOU DON'T AT LEAST GET SOME DECENT EXERCISE THIS AFTERNOON
GRAB
SET!!
!!?
FLASH
THEN LET'S REST FOR JUST A LITTLE WHILE...
IT'LL BE GOOD FOR BOTH OF US...!
I'M MOVED... THAT YOU'RE ACTUALLY... CONCERNED ABOUT ME ..
SNIFF
SNIFF
HUHR HEY!
YOU'VE GOT THE WRONG IDEA! IT'S JUST THAT IF YOU CAN'T MOVE, IT'S A HASSLE FOR ME.

GLOOM
WHY DO I ALWAYS FALL FOR THAT TRICK?
AT ANY RATE...

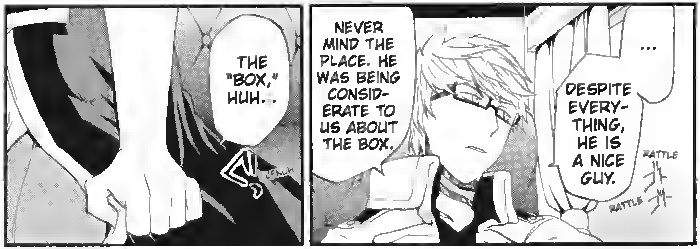
...I WONDER IF OX-KUN AND IVAN-KUN ARE ALL RIGHT.
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
MAYBE I'M WRONG, BUT...
...WHEN WE TOLD THOSE TWO ABOUT OUR MISSION...
...I THOUGHT I SENSED SOMETHING.
I DID IT!

RUSTLE
I JUST HOPE NOTHING HAPPENS...
TURN
TURN
TURN


CRUMBLE
CRUMBLE

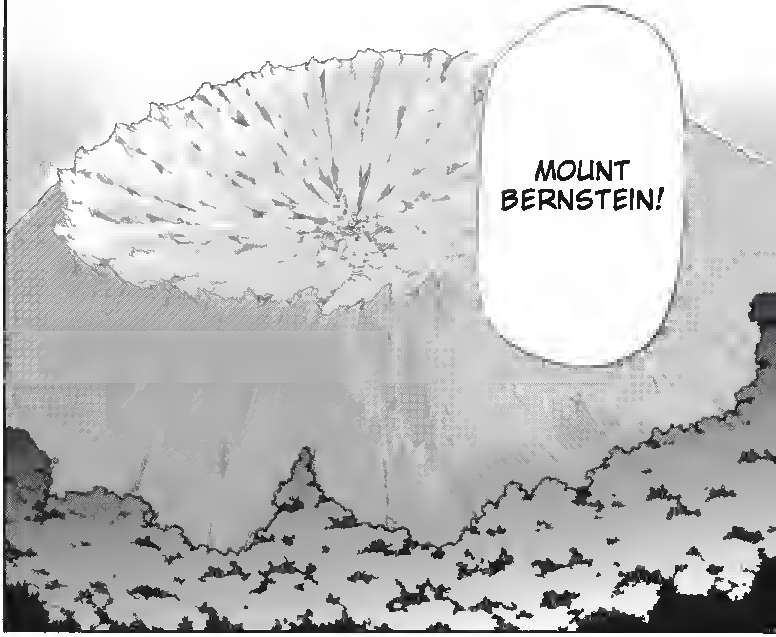

HE HASN'T CONTACTED US YET, WHICH MEANS EVERYTHING IS PEACHY!
YOU'RE A WORRY-WART, IVAN!
I IMAGINE THE DIRECTOR IS FURIOUS BY NOW.
HAH...

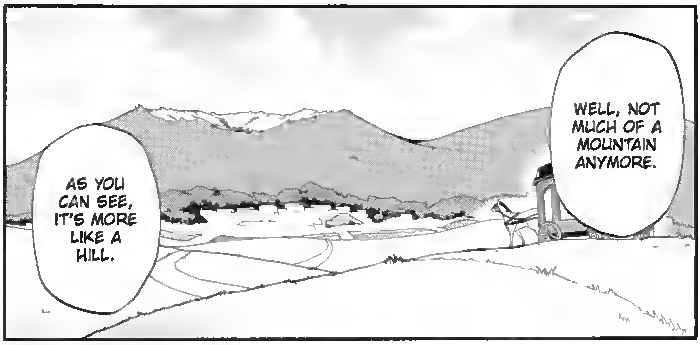
...SWITCHING MISSIONS WAS THE RIGHT THING TO DO.
BE-SIDES...
...CONSIDERING THE EMPHASIS THE DIRECTOR PUTS ON "NOT ATTRACTING ATTENTION"...


THE "BOX," HUH...
NEVER MIND THE PLACE. HE WAS BEING CONSID-ERATE TO US ABOUT THE BOX.
...
DESPITE EVERY-THING, HE IS A NICE GUY.
RATTLE
RATTLE

FLUTTER
...SET SAID WE WOULD JUST GET IT FROM A SHOP. AS SIMPLE AS THAT.
AN ANTIQUE SHOP CALLED PYGMALION...
SNATCHING OR STEALING IT FROM WHOEVER'S GOT IT WOULD BE A LITTLE...
BY THE WAY, HOW ARE WE GONNA GET IT?
YEAH. REGARDING THAT...
RUSTLE

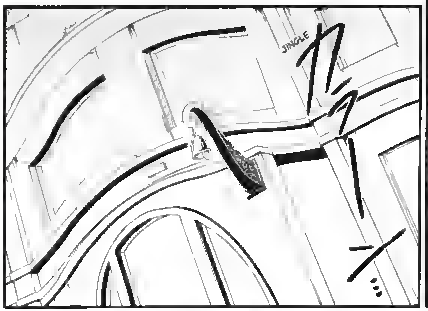
WHA ...?
APPARENTLY THE OWNER IS AN OLD FRIEND OF THE DIRECTOR.
WHAT DO YOU TAKE HIM FOR?
YOU FOCUS ON THAT?
...THE DIRECTOR ACTUALLY HAS FRIENDS!?
SORRY TO INTERRUPT YOUR CONVERSATION, BUT WE'RE ALMOST THERE.
CLOP
CLOP
GENTLEMEN...
LOOK.
IT'S BECOME A FAMOUS SPOT RECENTLY...


MOUNT BERNSTEIN!


AS YOU CAN SEE, IT'S MORE LIKE A HILL.
WELL, NOT MUCH OF A MOUNTAIN ANYMORE.

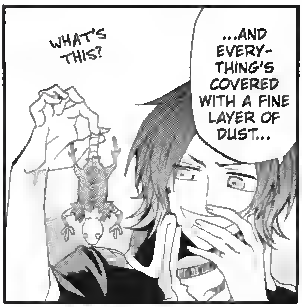
OK!
PUSH
I'M SURE YOU GENTLEMEN HAVE HEARD ABOUT THE METEOR SHOWER FROM A FEW YEARS AGO.
NO ONE IS POSITIVE OVER WHETHER THAT WAS DONE BY AN ERRANT METEOR, HOWEVER...
I'M OKAY.
...

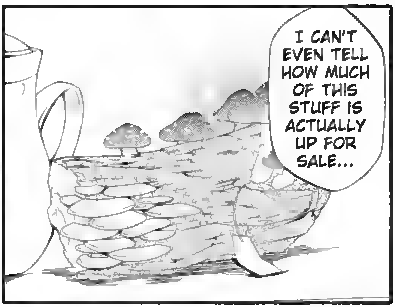
Pygmalion


JINGLE

EXCUSE ME...?

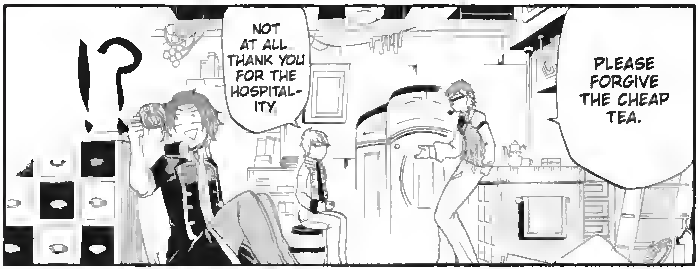
WELL, I DON'T THINK THIS PLACE GETS MANY CUSTOMERS.
THIS IS DEFINITELY THE PLACE.
IS THE OWNER IN BACK?

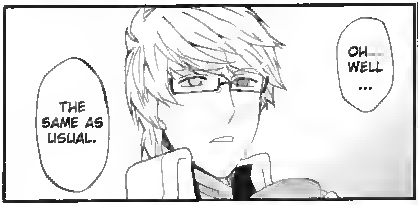

WHAT'S THIS?
...AND EVERY-THING'S COVERED WITH A FINE LAYER OF DUST...

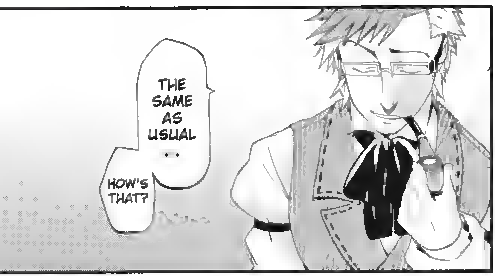

I CAN'T EVEN TELL HOW MUCH OF THIS STUFF IS ACTUALLY UP FOR SALE...

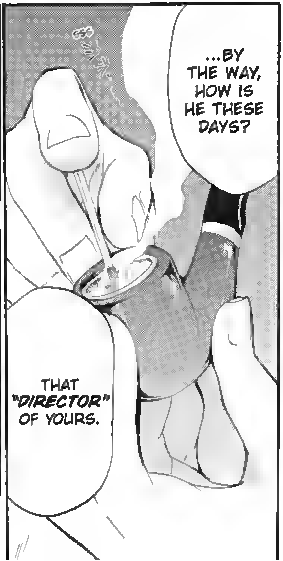
PARDON MY DUST.
CREAK

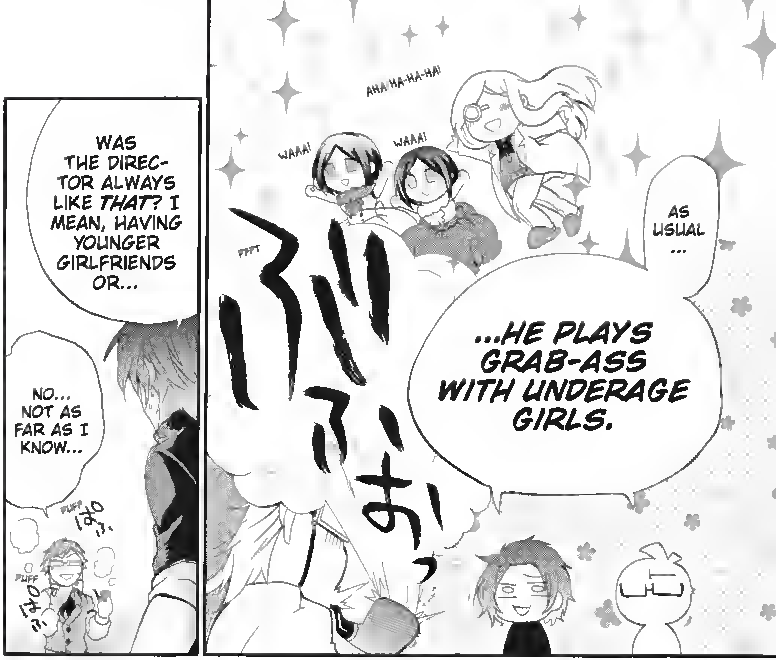
I ASSUMED HE WOULDN'T BE SENDING HIS BEST AND BRIGHTEST...
...BUT I DIDN'T EXPECT HIS AGENTS TO BE RUDE.
I'M THE OWNER, GALATEA. PLEASURE TO MEET YOU.
NO, I'M JUST PULLING YOUR LEG. AND IT'S TRUE—CUSTOMERS ARE FEW AND FAR BETWEEN
I'M SORRY. I THINK WE'VE GOTTEN OFF ON THE WRONG FOOT...
HUH? OH, NO, I MEANT THAT THE FRAGRANCE OF THIS DUST HAS AN AESTHETIC ALL ITS OWN...
"QUIET SIMPLICITY"?
I'M OK...
AS YOU KNOW THE DIRECTOR SENT US I'M IVAN
WELL, FIND YOUR-SELVES A SEAT OVER THERE
...AND I HEAR YOU'VE COME TO PICK UP THE BOX?


!?
NOT AT ALL. THANK YOU FOR THE HOSPITALITY.
PLEASE FORGIVE THE CHEAP TEA.


THE SAME AS USUAL.
OH... WELL...

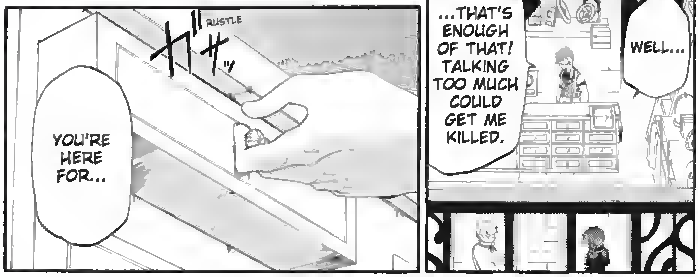

HOW'S THAT?
THE SAME AS USUAL...


...BY THE WAY, HOW IS HE THESE DAYS?
GO
THAT "DIRECTOR" OF YOURS.


AS USUAL...
...HE PLAYS GRAB-ASS WITH UNDERAGE GIRLS.
AHA HA-HA-HA!
WAAA!
WAAA!
PPPT
WAS THE DIRECTOR ALWAYS LIKE THAT? I MEAN, HAVING YOUNGER GIRLFRIENDS OR...
NO... NOT AS FAR AS I KNOW...
PUFF
PUFF

AH.. BUT COME TO THINK OF IT...
...I DO RECALL HIS RELATIONSHIP WITH SOMEONE WHO WAS MORE THAN A FRIEND BUT LESS THAN A GIRLFRIEND.
HAS HE TOLD YOU ABOUT HER?
NO, ABOUT ALL WE KNOW IS THAT YOU TWO ARE FRIENDS...
FRIENDS, HUH?
I SUPPOSE HE IS MY FRIEND. AS WELL AS MY KOUHAI, WHEN WE WERE IN THE SAME ARCHAEOLOGY GROUP.

ARCHAE-OLOGY?
YES.
WELL, TO PUT IT SIMPLY, IT'S THE STUDY OF OBJECTS AND RUINS THAT ANCIENT PEOPLE LEFT BEHIND.
IDLERS WITH A SILLY SENSE OF ADVENTURE HAVE A TASTE FOR THAT KIND OF THING.
OUT OF OUR TEAM, YOUR DIRECTOR AND ONE MORE PERSON...
...HAD EXCEPTIONAL TALENT. THEY ASTONISHED ME MANY A TIME...
...BUT NOW...
...ONE OF THEM IS DEAD.

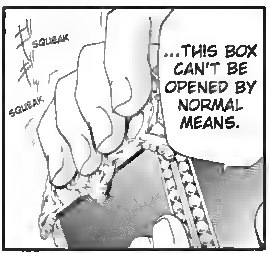

RUSTLE
YOU'RE HERE FOR...
...THAT'S ENOUGH OF THAT! TALKING TOO MUCH COULD GET ME KILLED.
WELL...

CLACK
...THIS, RIGHT?

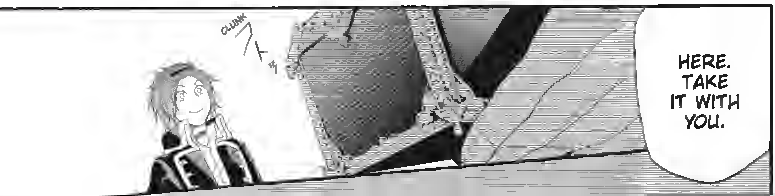
PANDORA'S BOX.
THE FORBIDDEN BOX THAT IS SAID TO CONTAIN ALL THE EVILS OF THE WORLD.
THIS BOX IS LIKE ADAM AND EVE'S FRUIT FROM THE TREE OF KNOWLEDGE ...
IT'S UNCLEAR WHETHER THEY ARE PART OF HISTORY OR SOMEONE'S INVENTED LEGEND.
EVEN AMONG US ARCHAEOLOGISTS, IT IS AS IF THESE OBJECTS WERE ON THE FAR SIDE OF DREAMS...

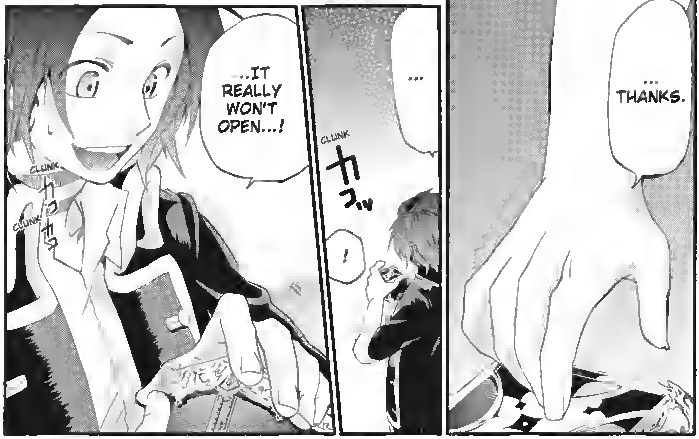
UNTIL THREE YEARS AGO, WHEN THE UNKNOWN CAME OUT OF THIS BOX!
YOU TWO SAW IT, DIDN'T YOU? THE MOUNTAIN THAT WAS SCOOPED OUT...
THE UN-LEASHING OF THE WISDOM PROBABLY CAUSED IT...
THE BOX...
.. WAS ONLY RECENTLY DISCOVERED AT THE SITE.
HUH...?
WHAT'S WRONG?

YOU LOOK PALE.


SQUEAK
SQUEAK
...THIS BOX CAN'T BE OPENED BY NORMAL MEANS.

AS YOU KNOW, ALL THE WISDOM HAS ALREADY FLOWN OUT OF THE BOX, SO IT'S QUITE EMPTY.
BE-SIDES ...
HA-HA-HA! DON'T WORRY.

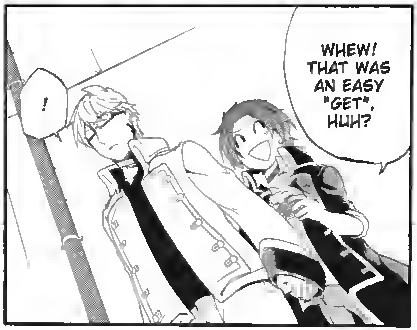

CLUNK
HERE. TAKE IT WITH YOU.

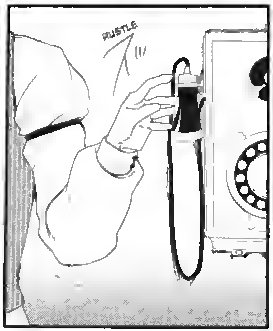

...IT REALLY WON'T OPEN...!
CLUNK
CLUNK
カラカラ
...
CLUNK
カラッ
!
...
THANKS.

SURE. HAVE A SAFE TRIP BACK.
WELL, WE SHOULD BE GOING... THANK YOU.
TOLD YOU.
GRIN
=w=

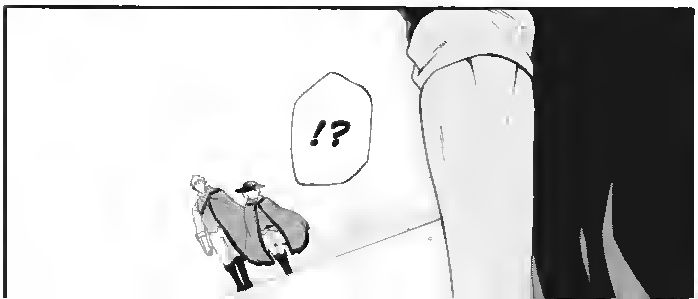
JINGLE
カラ〜ン

.....

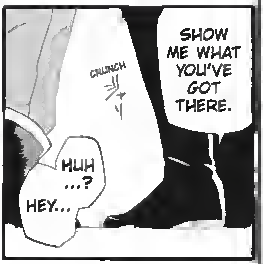

WHEW! THAT WAS AN EASY "GET", HUH?
!


RUSTLE

HEY! DON'T STOP SO SUDDEN-LY...
BLUMP

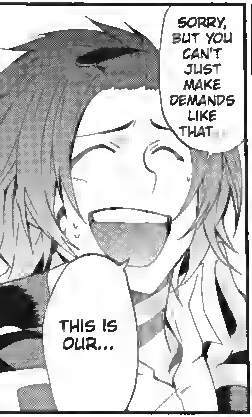

!?

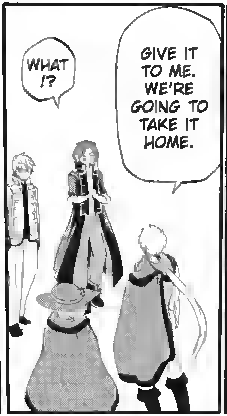
RUSTLE
A MERE BLOOD-THIRSTY KILLER HAS CAUGHT THE ATTENTION OF THE NOBLES?
OR DID THEY FIND OUT ABOUT THE BOX ...?
IBLIS SENTRIES!? WHAT ARE THEY DOING OUT HERE IN THE BOONIES?
AND...
...BOTH OF THEM ARE NOBLES?
SHINE
FOR NOW, WE'LL WALK PAST THEM NORMALLY..


SHOW ME WHAT YOU'VE GOT THERE.
CRUNCH
HUH ...?
HEY...

SORRY ABOUT THIS.
LEAN

HEY, REDHEAD.
...OR NOT!!


SORRY, BUT YOU CAN'T JUST MAKE DEMANDS LIKE THAT.
THIS IS OUR...

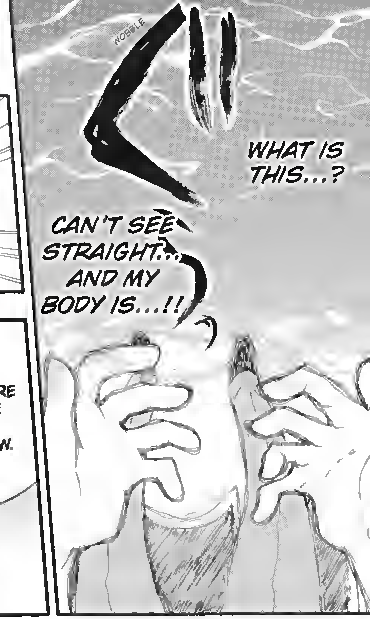

WHAT!?
GIVE IT TO ME. WE'RE GOING TO TAKE IT HOME.

I SEE.
YES, THAT IS DEFINITELY IT.

DON'T MAKE ME SAY IT AGAIN!
GIVE IT HERE!!
OH DEAR! I DO APOLO-GIZE!
BUT FOR YOUR OWN SAKES, YOU SHOULD GIVE IT TO HIM.
SHUDDER
SWISH
HE HAS A SHORT TEMPER, YOU SEE...

A SUCKER PUNCH, HUH? THAT'S NOT NICE...
GRAB
SHOOSH
!
HA!
OX!?
URK!

SWISH!
!


WHAT IS THIS...?
CAN'T SEE STRAIGHT... AND MY BODY IS...!!

I'LL TAKE CARE OF THE BRUTE SOMEHOW.
YOU GET AWAY WITH THAT.

ANYWAY, I HAVE TO GET THE BOX AWAY FROM HERE...
...
MY EYES ARE UNFOCUSED... IS IT SOME KIND OF WISDOM...!?

!
BASH

SWISH
GRAB
YOU'RE NOT GOING ANY-WHERE!
HE'S FAST...
IF YOU PUNCH THAT BEAUTIFUL FACE, I PROMISE, THERE WILL BE HELL TO PAY
HE'S WEARING LONG SLEEVES AND LONG PANTS WHO WERE YOU INTENDING TO HIT?
STOP RIGHT THERE!
FREEZE
YOU CAN HAVE THE BOY OVER THERE. LET ME TAKE THIS ONE.
SNAP

DASH
ALL RIGHT, FINE!
HMPH...
CLENCH
NOW I KNOW THAT IF HE TAGS ME, I'LL BE IN BIG TROUBLE...
I'LL USE ICARUS HERE TO ESCAPE AND WAIT FOR MY EYESIGHT TO GET BACK TO NORMAL...
TAP
!
WOOSH
IT FIGURES!! WHEN IT'S ALL I CAN DO JUST TO STAND UP..
THUD
... THERE'S NO WAY I'LL BE ABLE TO BALANCE IN MID-AIR
FWISH
!!

HEE-HEE-HEE...I APOLOGIZE FOR BEFORE.
AFTER OVERUSING THE WISDOM SO MUCH, IT SEEMS HE'S FORGOTTEN THE CONCEPT OF RESTRAINT.
SO THEY ARE WISEMEN... AND SHE'S THE EVE...
OH MY! YOU ARE HANDSOME, AREN'T YOU? JUST MY TYPE, ESPECIALLY AROUND THE EYES.
WOULD YOU CONSIDER HAVING A CUP OF TEA WITH ME AFTER THIS ?
UNFOR-TUNATE-LY
I HAVE NO INTEREST IN MEN WHO DRESS UP AS WOMEN.
OH NO! HOW VEXING! HOW DID YOU FIGURE IT OUT?
STILL, I FIND THAT SHARP MIND ATTRACTIVE TOO.
AS WELL AS...

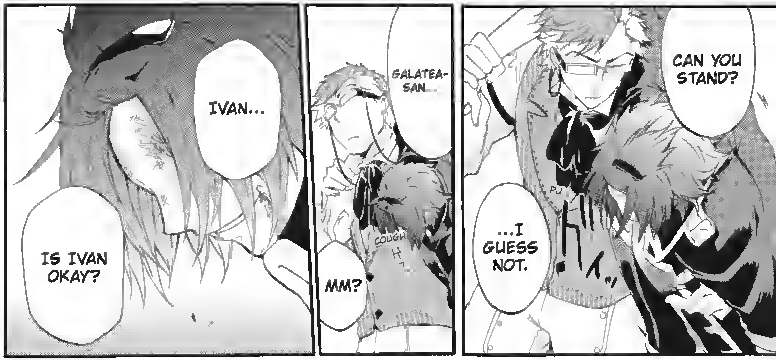
...YOUR SLIGHTLY VULNERABLE SIDE.
パチ
WINK
!?

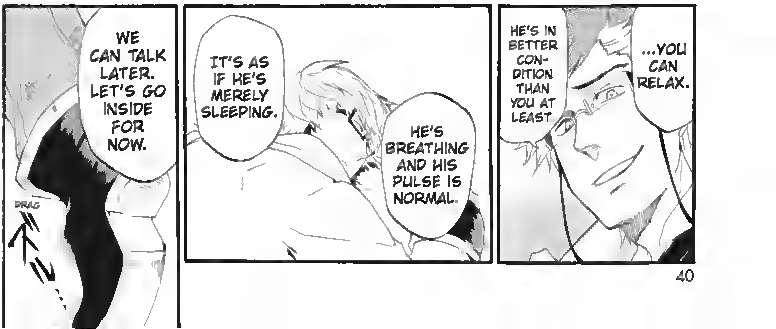
THUD
I'M SORRY.
JUST THINK THAT IT'S BETTER THAN BEING HIT IN THE FACE.
ALL RIGHT, THEN ...
OH, FOR HEAVEN'S SAKE.
EXCUSE ME?
DON'T I ALWAYS TELL YOU TO REIN IT IN A LITTLE?

DANGLE
IF HE DIES, IT WILL ONLY MEAN TROUBLE FOR US LATER.
COVERING IT UP...
NO WORRIES THERE
THIS GUY..
...KEEPS GRINNING, NO MATTER HOW MANY TIMES I HIT HIM.
HEH ...
HEH-HEH...

WE HAVE WHAT WE CAME FOR.
TEE HEE. CHUCKLE
AH WELL SHALL WE GO?
?
"INTO"?
WHUMP
OH, THAT'S WHAT YOU'RE INTO?
HA
HA HA
TAK
TAK
CLENCH
HA-HA-HA-HA...!
HA...!

THEY REALLY DID A NUMBER ON YOU.
TSK...
SSK


IVAN...
IS IVAN OKAY?
GALATEA-SAN...
COUGH
MM?
CAN YOU STAND?
PU
...I GUESS NOT.


WE CAN TALK LATER. LET'S GO INSIDE FOR NOW.
DRAG
IT'S AS IF HE'S MERELY SLEEPING.
HE'S BREATHING AND HIS PULSE IS NORMAL.
HE'S IN BETTER CONDITION THAN YOU AT LEAST.
...YOU CAN RELAX.

FORGIVE ME. THIS PLACE IS A LOT DUSTIER THAN THE SHOP.
IT'S BECAUSE I HAVEN'T USED THE LIVING ROOM IN SO LONG. UM, FIRST AID KIT, FIRST AID KIT...
OW... GALATEA-SAN. .
HEY, YOU STILL NEED TO LIE DOWN...
I'M REALLY SORRY...
WOBBLE
LETTING THEM TAKE THE BOX .. RIGHT AFTER YOU GAVE IT TO US ..
RUSTLE
SINCE YOU MENTION THAT...
... THERE'S SOMETHING I NEED TO APOLOGIZE TO YOU ABOUT TOO.

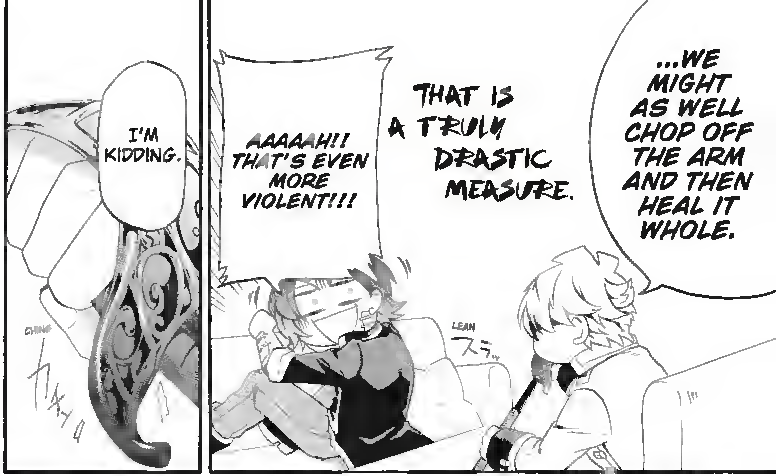
AND YOU TWO WERE ACTING SOMEWHAT SUSPICIOUSLY, SO I WAS WARY OF YOU.
YOU SEE, HE TOLD ME THAT A MAN AND A WOMAN WERE COMING TO PICK IT UP.
!
WELL, IT TURNED OUT ALL RIGHT IN THE END, SO I HOPE YOU FORGIVE ME
I CALLED HIM AFTER YOU LEFT, THOUGH, AND HE CONFIRMED IT. SEEMS I WAS ERRING ON THE SIDE OF CAUTION.
THIS IS...
...THE REAL BOX!

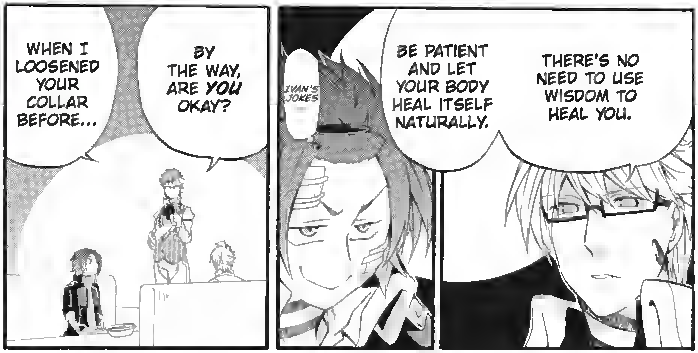
UNKNOWN

Chapter 6: Mastermind Pretending to Be a Hero (Dark Hero)

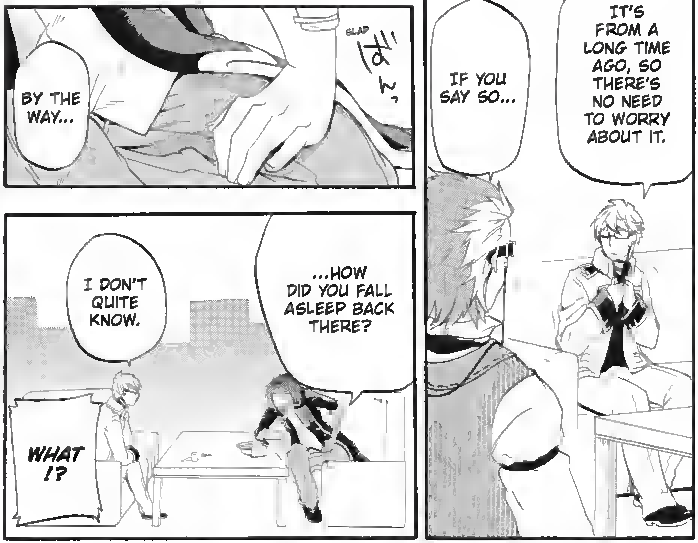
OW!
THROB
THROB
OH!
YOU'RE FINALLY UP.
...?

SQUEEZE
U-UM. .I'D APPRECIATE IT IF YOU TREATED ME WITH A LITTLE MORE T.L.C...
OW...
DON'T COM-PLAIN.
AH! OW! OW! THAT HURTS!!!
TUG
TUG
I KNOW!! IT'S LIKE HE TOOK ME FOR A SANDBAG!!
YOU CERTAINLY DID TAKE YOUR LUMPS.
IN THAT CASE ...
TRUE ...
...BUT THAT DOESN'T WORK ON THIS TYPE OF WOUND.
DAMMIT. IF IT WERE A CUT, I COULD USE AID FROM THE GOD OF PROPHECY TO HEAL IT RIGHT AWAY...


I'M KIDDING.
GYING
AAAAAH!! THAT'S EVEN MORE VIOLENT!!!
THAT IS A TRULY DRASTIC MEASURE.
LEAN
...WE MIGHT AS WELL CHOP OFF THE ARM AND THEN HEAL IT WHOLE.


WHEN I LOOSENED YOUR COLLAR BEFORE...
BY THE WAY, ARE YOU OKAY?
I WAN'S JOKES
BE PATIENT AND LET YOUR BODY HEAL ITSELF NATURALLY.
THERE'S NO NEED TO USE WISDOM TO HEAL YOU.

OH, THIS...
RUSTLE
...I NOTICED THE SCAR ON YOUR CHEST.

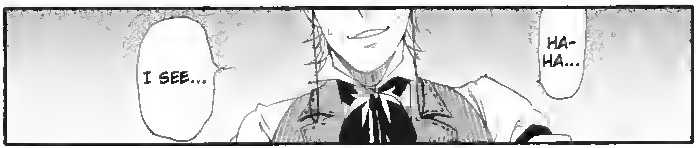

IT'S FROM A LONG TIME AGO, SO THERE'S NO NEED TO WORRY ABOUT IT.
IF YOU SAY SO...
SLAP
BY THE WAY...
...HOW DID YOU FALL ASLEEP BACK THERE?
I DON'T QUITE KNOW.
WHAT!?
THE LAST THING I REMEMBER IS THAT MAN WINKING AT ME.
PERHAPS HE USED SOME KIND OF WISDOM ON ME. OR SOMETHING ELSE...
HUH!? HE'S A USER TOO!? I MEAN, HE'S A HE!?
EITHER WAY, THE BOX WAS STOLEN BECAUSE OF MY CARELESSNESS...
NOT EXACTLY...

THE REAL BOX IS RIGHT HERE.
GRIN
ニヤっ
!!
IS THIS WHAT THEY CALL A LUCKY BREAK?
GALATEA-SAN WAS THINKING ON HIS FEET!

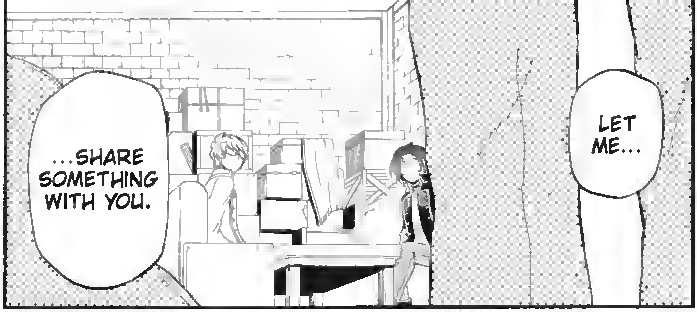
HE WAS SUSPICIOUS, SO HANDED OVER A REPLICA!
SUSPICIOUS OF US, THAT IS..
AH, YES...
INDEED, CHALK IT UP TO LUCK.
IT WORKS OUT, BECAUSE NOW THE DIRECTOR WON'T KILL US .
HUH? WHAT'S THIS?

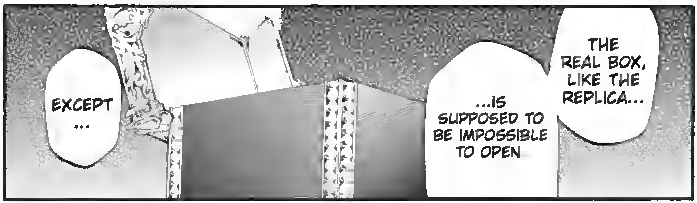
THE REAL BOX OPENS.
RATTLE
RATTLE
SNAP

GALATEA-SAN?


I SEE...
HA-HA...

I CAN UNDERSTAND THE DESIRE TO OBTAIN ALL OF THE WISDOM...
BUT WHY WOULD HIS GOAL BE TO BURY THEM ALL IN THEIR ORIGINAL BOX?
IT DIDN'T MAKE SENSE TO ME WHEN HE EXPLAINED IT.
WHAT'S GOTTEN INTO YOU?


LET ME...
...SHARE SOMETHING WITH YOU.


THE REAL BOX, LIKE THE REPLICA...
...IS SUPPOSED TO BE IMPOSSIBLE TO OPEN
EXCEPT ...

...FOR THE ONE WHO FIRST OPENED IT!!
NOW IT'S MY TURN.
AND I HOPE YOU CAN ANSWER.

HOW IS IT THAT YOU CAN OPEN THE BOX...?
SHUT
IT'S NOT A VERY INTERESTING STORY.
...

IN FACT, IT'S OUTRIGHT BORING...
...AND STUPID.

WE'D LOST OUR PARENTS DURING THE CONFLICT AND WERE RAISED IN AN ORPHANAGE...
WE HAD THE INNOCENT BUT PASSIONATE DESIRE TO BECOME HEROES.
OX! Hehe!
I FOUND SOMETHING AMAZING!!
UNKNOWN?
YEAH! ALL THE MAGIC YOU READ ABOUT IN STORIES IS BASED ON THIS! THEY'RE THE RULES THAT MAKE UP A WORLD NOBODY KNOWS ABOUT!
THEN SINCE YOU FOUND IT, CAN WE BECOME HEROES LIKE IN STORIES?
SHIN
にっ
SURE CAN!

THE ELATION THAT CAME WITH HAVING HIGH HOPES FOR SOMETHING MYSTERIOUS...
ADAM GETS PERMISSION FROM EVE... WHAT IS THIS?
SOUNDS LIKE IT TAKES TWO PEOPLE TO USE IT.
WHY DOES IT HAVE TO BE A PAIN LIKE THAT?
...AND THE SENSE OF ACCOMPLISHMENT THAT ACCOMPANIED SOLVING A MYSTERY A LITTLE AT A TIME...
...PROVIDED PLENTY OF DRIVING FORCE FOR THE CHILDREN.
I'VE GOT IT! THE SNAKE'S EYE IS POINTING TO THE SPOT!!
THE MILKY WAY!!
AND SO...
THEN THIS DIAGRAM IS A CONSTELLATION!
WHAT'S THIS ..? KYKLOS GALAKTIKOS..
...AS CIRCUMSTANCES WOULD HAVE IT, THE TWO OF US FOUND THE BOX.
HERE ...
HERE IT IS, IVAN !!!
PANDORA'S BOX!!

NOW WE CAN SAVE HIM AND BECOME WORLDWIDE HEROES TOO!!
THE DREAMS OF ALL THREE OF US WILL COME TRUE!!
YEAH!!
THUMP
THUMP
D-LINK
!!?
FSSS

FSSSS
WH-WHAT IS THIS!?
WATER!?
DASH
CRAP!
TOSS
SPLASH
IVAN!?
AAAH!!
ZA
HEY, THIS ISN'T STOP-PING ...
SPLASH
SPLASH
DARN IT!
WHAT THE HECK IS GOING ON!?
SLIP
!!
SWISH
IVAN!!

RUSTLE

A GIANT... TREE?
HUH ...?
THUD
THUD
!?
CONGRATU-LATIONS..
...OMNIPOTENT BOY.

EVERYTHING IN THIS WORLD IS YOURS EVERYTHING BUT KNOWLEDGE.
IF YOU HOLD YOUR HAND ALOFT, THERE SHALL BE LIGHT AND A WORLD SHALL BE BORN. .
RUSTLE
...YOU IGNORANT, ALL-POWERFUL BOY.
HUH ..? I DON'T GET IT.
THERE IS NO NEED.
YOU SHALL LEARN NOTHING UNDER-STANDING IS FORBIDDEN.
WHY !?
THE REASON FOR MY EXISTENCE . MY NAME . EVERY-THING
BECAUSE YOU HAVE OBTAINED POWER AND NOTHING MORE.
SPLISH
FWISH

?
SPLASH
ポチャン
SPLASH
ポチャン
SPLASH
ポチャン
SPLASH
ポチャン
SPLASH
ポチャン
SPLASH
ポチャン

SPLOOSH
SPLOOSH
!
SPLOOSH
SPLOOSH
SPLOOSH
SPLOOSH

CONGRATULATIONS, OMNISCIENT BOY.
YOU KNOW EVERYTHING IN THIS WORLD. HOWEVER, YOU ARE NOT CAPABLE OF DOING ANYTHING...
... YOU ALL-KNOWING, IMPOTENT BOY.
IF YOU BUT LOOK, THE MECHANISMS OF EVERYTHING WILL APPEAR TO YOU AND THE RULES OF EVERYTHING WILL BOW BEFORE YOU.
BUT YOU ARE NOT ALLOWED TO ACHIEVE ANYTHING IN ALL THINGS, YOU ARE POWERLESS.
WH-WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT!?
YOU HAVE NOTHING TO FEAR.
BECAUSE YOU HAVE ATTAINED KNOWLEDGE AND NOTHING MORE.
PWISH
ヒュイ!!

AAAAAAAAAH!
IVAN!?
SWISH
IVAN!!
HEY, IVAN!!
SPLASH
!!
...I SEE..
THAT'S WHAT IT MEANT...
DRIP
DRIP
BLOOP
!?
TWO HUMANS, ADAM THE USER AND EVE THE KEEPER.
IN OTHER WORDS.. IT'S ..

AND IGNORANT OMNIPOTENCE!
AN ALMIGHTY...

...INCOMPETENT OMNISCIENCE
TOGETHER, WE'RE

KILL ME!!
RIGHT NOW!!!
THERE'S
WHA...? WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT ...?
SWISH
OX!!
IN SHORT, AT THIS RATE...!
SLASH
SWISH
...NO WAY I COULD EVER DO THAT!!

.. DON'T WORRY.. WAY YOU ARE NOW ...
STAGGER
THERE'S NOTHING ..
WH-WHAT JUST HAPPENED ...?
THUD
WHUMP
... YOU... CAN'T DO...
IVAN!!
BOOM
HEY!!
WHAT THE HECK IS GOING ON...?
TURN
WHOOM
AH !!?
WHAT HAPPENED TO US...?
I... DON'T UNDER-STAND ANY OF THIS .. HEY, IVAN .
CRACKLE

WHAT THE HECK IS THIS!!?
DON'T JUST LIE THERE! TELL ME ...!!
HEY!!!

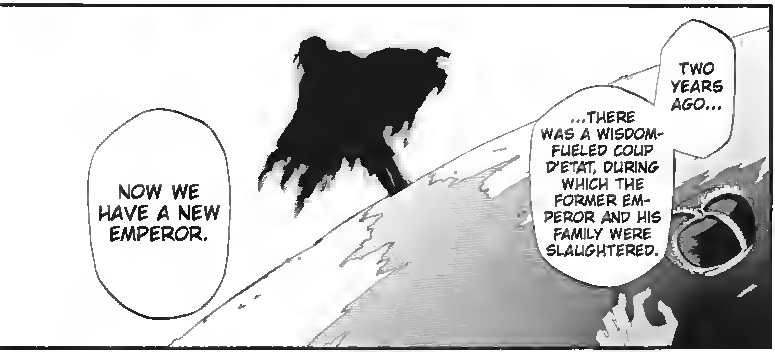
ROAR

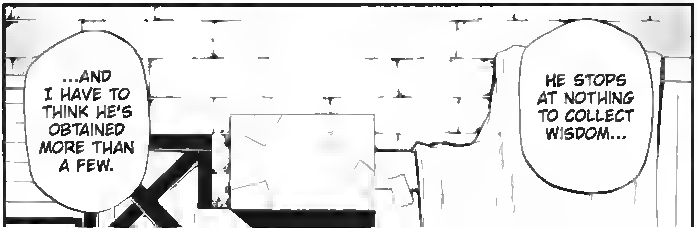
KI-SHA
C-ACK
...THE REST, GALATEA-SAN.
AND YOU KNOW...

MY BODY COULDN'T WITHSTAND ALL OF THE WISDOM, SO IT DISPERSED...
AND THEN THERE WAS OX'S SPONTANEOUS DISCHARGE, WHICH BLEW THE TOP OFF THE MOUNTAIN ...
AS A RESULT ...
...THE ORPHANAGE THAT TOOK CARE OF US WAS VAPORIZED ...
...WITH EVERYONE IN IT, INCLUDING OUR GOOD FRIEND.
THAT'S NOT ALL...

PEOPLE WHO WERE CAUGHT UP IN THE SCRAMBLE FOR THE WISDOM...
PEOPLE WHO WERE ATTACKED BY APPLES, NOT EVEN ABLE TO DEFEND THEMSELVES ...
PEOPLE WHO FELL VICTIM TO DIVINE PUNISH-MENT...
CLENCH
THEY ALL DIED BECAUSE OF THE WISDOM.
HEROES, NOTHING! WE MURDERED THOSE PEOPLE...!
AND SO, TO PREVENT FURTHER DAMAGE FROM THE WISDOM, YOU WISH TO SEAL ALL OF IT UP AGAIN...
ATONEMENT, IS IT?
I STRONGLY ADVISE AGAINST IT.
!?

I DON'T KNOW WHAT THE DIRECTOR'S PLAN IS...
RUSTLE
...BUT TO BE HONEST, PROVOKING A FIGHT WITH THE EMPIRE...
...IS RIDICULOUS.


TWO YEARS AGO...
...THERE WAS A WISDOM-FUELED COUP D'ETAT, DURING WHICH THE FORMER EMPEROR AND HIS FAMILY WERE SLAUGHTERED.
NOW WE HAVE A NEW EMPEROR.


HE STOPS AT NOTHING TO COLLECT WISDOM...
...AND I HAVE TO THINK HE'S OBTAINED MORE THAN A FEW.

BE-
SIDES..
...THOSE WHO MISUSE OR ABUSE THE POWER, WHETHER IT BE TO PLUNDER OR MURDER, ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR THEIR ACTIONS.
IT'S NOT ON YOU TO BEAR THE BURDEN OF THEIR SINS!
EVEN SO...
...THERE'S NO DENYING THAT WE'RE THE ONES WHO SCATTERED THE WISDOM. BUT ALSO...
...IT'S OUR FAULT THAT MANY PEOPLE DIED...
...SO JUST WATCHING ...
...FROM THE SIDELINES, SMILING, IS UNTHINK-ABLE.
OH, COME NOW, "SMILING"? SURELY THAT'S AN EXAGGERA-TION.
YOU TWO AREN'T THAT CALLLOUS.
ACTU-ALLY..

...I DO SMILE AT EVERY-THING.
...IT SOUNDS CRAZY WHEN YOU THINK ABOUT IT RATIONAL-LY
AND MAYBE RETURNING THE WISDOM TO ITS ORIGINAL CONTAINER CHANGES NOTHING.
TRUE ...
!
...
BUT...
...THERE MUST BE SOME-THING...
...THAT GUIDES PEOPLE TOWARD A BETTER WORLD WITHOUT RELYING ON THE WISDOM OF THE GODS.

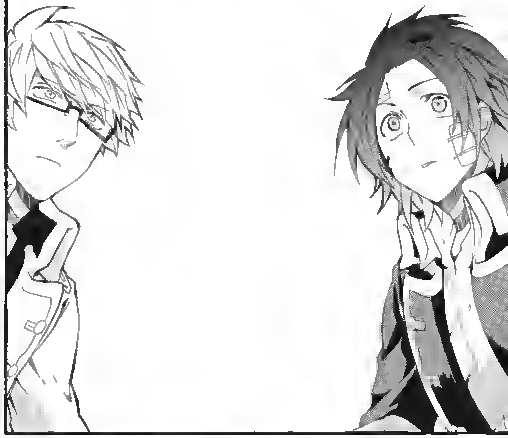
SOME KIND OF HUMAN WISDOM!
THAT'S WHAT WE'RE LOOKING FOR!

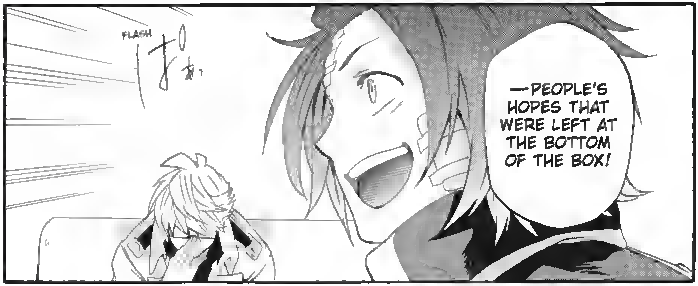
...
YOU'RE LIKE...
...A GREAT PERSON WHO INVENTED SOMETHING GROUND-BREAKING.
?
YOU WORKED HARD TO CREATE THIS THING FOR THE SAKE OF THE WORLD AND THE PEOPLE IN IT...
...BUT IN THE END, IT DESTROYS BOTH.
IT'S IRONIC...
SIZZLE
...BUT HAS HAPPENED OFTEN, FROM ANCIENT TIMES ON.
FOO
BUT WHAT YOU MUSTN'T FORGET...

AND THE ORIGINAL INTENTION WAS TO HELP HUMANITY.

...IS THAT THEY TRULY WERE GREAT PEOPLE.

I TAKE BACK WHAT I SAID BEFORE
I HAVE A FEELING YOU TWO WILL BE ABLE TO FIND THEM—




FLASH
—PEOPLE'S HOPES THAT WERE LEFT AT THE BOTTOM OF THE BOX!

THE DIRECTOR TOLD ME TO SEND YOU BACK SOON...
.. BUT YOU WOULDN'T BE ABLE TO CATCH A CARRIAGE NOW ANYWAY.
WELL, IT'S ALREADY DARK OUTSIDE...
...SO YOU SHOULD SPEND THE NIGHT HERE.
WELL... AT LEAST WE HAVE THE BOX.
I REALIZED HE WOULD GET ANGRY THE MOMENT WE TRADED MISSIONS WITH SET.
YEAH, RIGHT!?
I SEE!!! THE DIRECTOR IS WANTING TO YELL AT US!!
SO I'M SURE HE WON'T BE THAT ANGRY...

READY?
WE'RE BACK, JUST LIKE NORMAL !!
BAM
SHUT
!!
GLANCE
チョロ
GLANCE
チョロ
OKAY, SO HE WASN'T WAITING FOR US AT THE DOOR...
AH...

...
WELCOME HOME.
O-OH, DIRECTOR ...
THANK YOU FOR ROUSING YOURSELF SO EARLY IN THE MORNING TO WELCOME US BACK...
...I DIDN'T.
YOU'RE ANGRY AT US?
DO I LOOK HAPPY?
I APOLOGIZE FOR SECRETLY TRADING MISSIONS.
BOW
BUT LOOK!
WE'VE GOT THE BOX AND NOTHING HAPPENS WHEN I HOLD IT!
SWISH
WE DID HAVE AN ENCOUNTER WITH IMPERIAL SOLDIERS BUT THEY DIDN'T FIND OUT WE WERE WISEMEN OR THE "BERSERKER".
THAT'S RIGHT! WE THOUGHT IT WOULD BE BETTER THAN GOING TO THE EMPIRE WHERE WE'D EASILY DRAW ATTENTION—

I DON'T WANT TO HEAR ANY EXCUSES.
CERTAINLY... I WAS WORRIED ABOUT YOU TWO RE-OPENING OLD WOUNDS...
...AND I AM GRATEFUL THAT YOU BROUGHT THE BOX BACK.

BUT WHAT I...
...MOST WANTED TO AVOID...

...WAS HAVING SET AND NOAH GO TO THE EMPIRE!!
YOU HAVE NO IDEA WHAT YOU'VE DONE.
LOOK! THERE IT IS!!
RUMBLE
I'M FINE!
SET!! RUNNING LIKE THAT ISN'T GOOD FOR YOU ...!

THE IBLIS EMPIRE!!

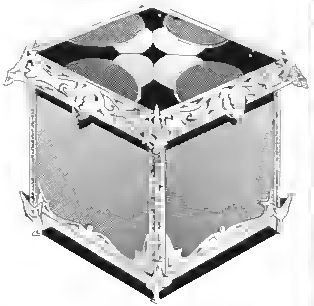
SO2331X

UNKNOWN

Chapter 7:
Your Name (True Name)

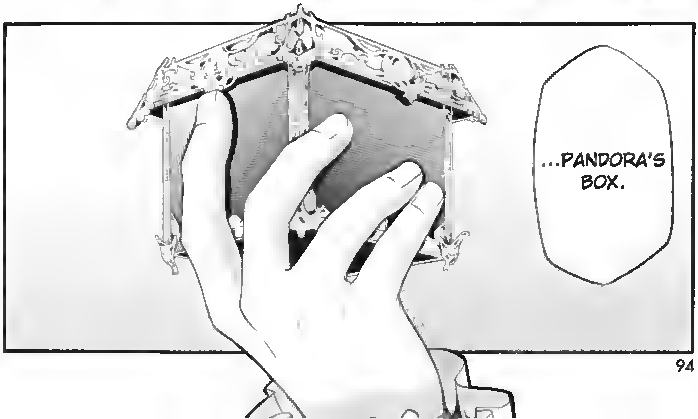
UNKNOWN

YOU DID WELL...



THIS IS THE BEGINNING OF EVERY-THING...
GOD'S BOON, BEQUEATHED TO THE SON OF MAN...

...YIGSEU KINES...
...AND NEGNIS ADECUT.


...PANDORA'S BOX.

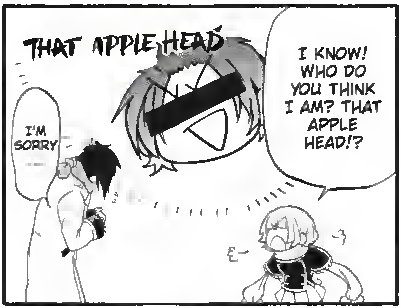
AVEYASH'S PLATOON ALSO RETURNED A SHORT WHILE AGO.
I SHALL REPORT TO HIS MAJESTY ABOUT YOUR ACCOMPLISHMENT AS SOON AS HE RETURNS.
...RETURNS?
HIS MAJESTY IS OUT?
YES, ALTHOUGH I EXPECT HIM BACK SHORTLY.
HIS MAJESTY...
...IS IN TOWN TODAY.

FLUTTER
FLUTTER
WOW! THE CASTLE TOWN IS JUST LIKE I IMAGINED!!

BUZZ
ガヤ
BUZZ
ガヤ
MANY PEOPLE IN THE STREET!!
LOTS OF SHOPS!!
AH... PARDON ME.
I-I'M SORRY.
C-CER-TAINLY...
BUMP
ドン!
BUMP
ドン!
RIGHT, NOAH!?
I LOVE HOW SHOWY IT IS COMPARED TO THE COUNTRY! ♡
SET...!
THE TWINS WOULD PROBABLY LIKE THIS.
AH! LOOK AT THAT!

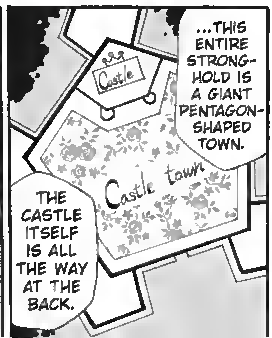
AS IVAN-KUN SAID, WE'RE ON A SCOUTING MISSION...!
FRET
FRET
SO... UH...PLEASE REFRAIN FROM DOING ANYTHING THAT WOULD DRAW ATTENTION ...

IN THE FIRST PLACE, I'M SURE YOU KNOW...


THAT APPLE HEAD
I KNOW! WHO DO YOU THINK I AM? THAT APPLE HEAD!?
I'M SORRY

BE-SIDES ...

...SO WE'LL BE FINE AS LONG AS I DON'T USE WISDOM AND CAUSE A SCENE.
THERE ARE ONLY A SPRINKLING OF SENTRIES HERE AND THERE IN THE TOWN ..


...THIS ENTIRE STRONG-HOLD IS A GIANT PENTAGON-SHAPED TOWN.
Castle
Castle town
THE CASTLE ITSELF IS ALL THE WAY AT THE BACK.

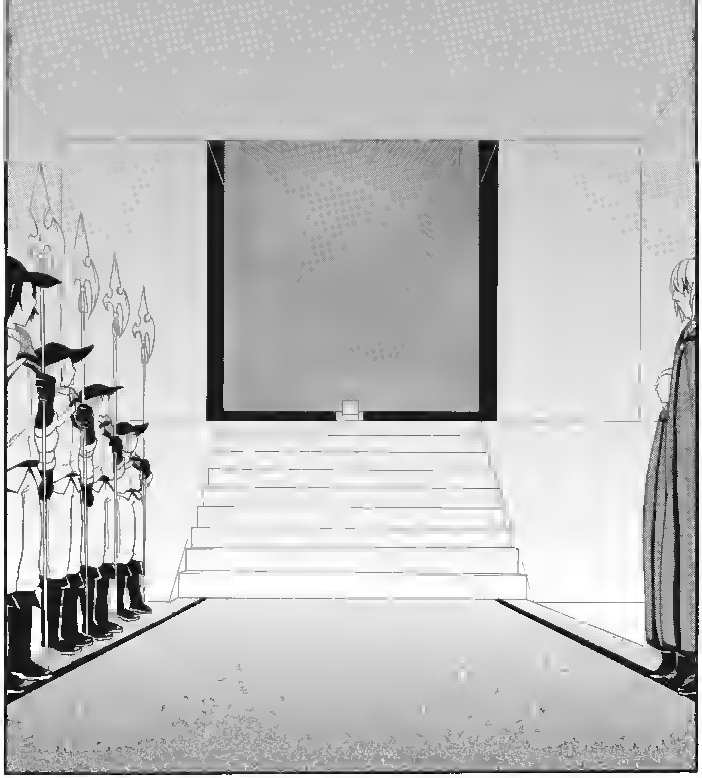
.....
RUSTLE
...I WANTED TO SEE THE CASTLE, IF ONLY FROM AFAR.
THAT'S WHY I SWITCHED WITH THEM. SO I WON'T DO ANYTHING ELSE THAT COULD GET US IN TROUBLE.
THAT ASIDE...
...HOW ARE YOU FEELING AFTER THE LONG CARRIAGE RIDE FOR HALF OF THE WAY?
THANK YOU, SET! YOU'RE THINKING ABOUT MY WELFARE AGAIN...!
THAT'S NOT WHY I ASKED!!
MOVED
CLATTER
ガチャーン
GOOD GRIEF...

THEY LOOK LIKE THEY'RE HAVING A GOOD TIME...FOR SO EARLY IN THE MORNING
GOOD FOR THEM. IT'S SO PEACEFUL HERE.
SORRY ABOUT THAT. MY HAND WAS SHAKING.
LOOK! YOU'RE SO DRUNK YOU LITERALLY CAN'T HOLD YOUR LIQUOR!
PROBABLY TO SIGNAL YOU THAT YOU'VE HAD ENOUGH!
THIS COUNTRY WAS ON THE VERGE OF LOSING THE WAR AGAINST OUR NEIGHBOR, BUT EVERYTHING CHANGED WHEN THE WISDOM APPEARED HERE ..
OUR COUNTRY WON A DRAMATIC VICTORY, WHICH... I SUPPOSE YOU COULD SAY RESULTED IN PEACE...
PEACE-FUL, HUH...?
TUG
BUT...

...AFTER THAT, PEOPLE MURDERED ONE ANOTHER OVER THE WISDOM RIGHT HERE AT HOME. SO MUCH FOR PEACE.
AND...
...SOMETHING LIKE THAT...
...IS JUST UNFORGIVABLE!
INDEED...
WELL!
THEN WE'D BETTER STICK TO THE MISSION AND SCOUT OUT THE TOWN, RIGHT?
I-I KNOW MY JOB!!
I-I'M SORRY
SKITTER

SO...
ROLL
ROLL
TAP
CLINK
WHOSE SIDE ARE YOU ON...?
HEAR, HEAR!
WELL, NOTHING GOOD HAS COME OF SETTING YOU FREE TO DRINK LIKE A FISH!
...I SAID, "YOU'RE LIKE A SLAVE DRIVER"...
SCRATCH
SCRATCH
OH, REALLY? THIS EARLY?
HMMM... TIME TO GET BACK TO WORK.
BONG
BONG

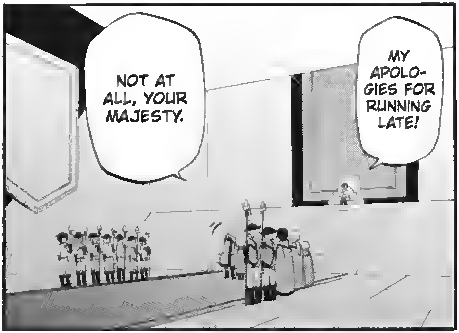
I AM BUSY FROM TIME TO TIME.
LIAR!
JINGLE
SEE YOU AGAIN!
WAVE WAVE
...COME TO THINK OF IT, WHAT'S HE DO AGAIN?
IDIOT! HOW THE HELL SHOULD I KNOW!?
GOOD POINT!!
GYAHAHAHA!
RUSTLE



TAK
カッ
TAK
フッ
TAK
カッ
TAK
フッ

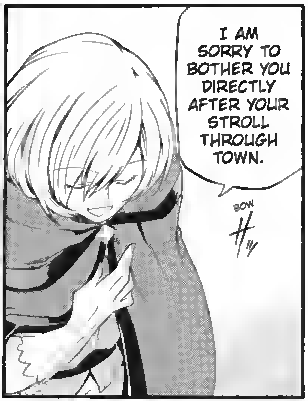
WELL, WELL, NEGNIS-SAMA.
THE ARROGANT LOOK ON YOUR FACE TELLS ME YOU'VE CARRIED OUT YOUR MISSION SUCCESSFULLY.
AND YOUR BEARING IS HAUGHTIER THAN EVER...
SHUT YOUR MOUTH, SKIN-HEAD!!
HA-HA-HA!
YOU TRULY ARE A SIMPLE-TON.
GLANCE
BUT YOU'D BETTER LOWER YOUR VOICE.
FOR HE RETURNS.
RUSTLE

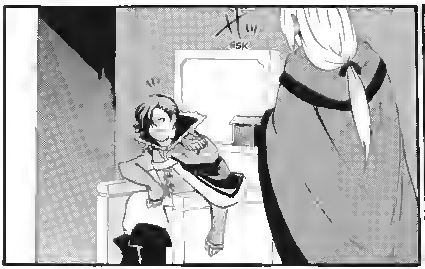
HIS MAJESTY, EMPEROR ARGANBONE!

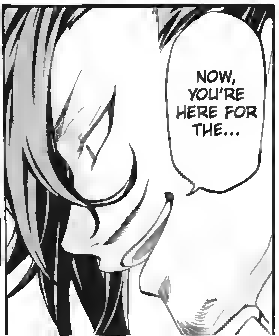

MY APOLOGIES FOR RUNNING LATE!
NOT AT ALL, YOUR MAJESTY.

WHUMP
WHOOF!

YES! IT IS NECESSARY FOR ME TO HEAR THE FRANK OPINIONS OF OUR FAIR CITIZENS ONCE IN A WHILE.
AND QUENCH MY THIRST WHILE I'M AT IT...


I AM SORRY TO BOTHER YOU DIRECTLY AFTER YOUR STROLL THROUGH TOWN.

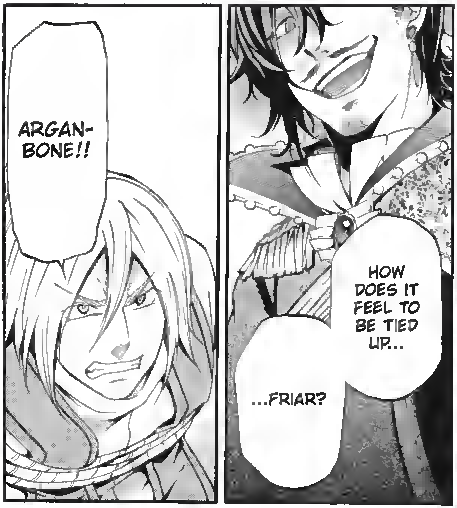



NOW, YOU'RE HERE FOR THE...

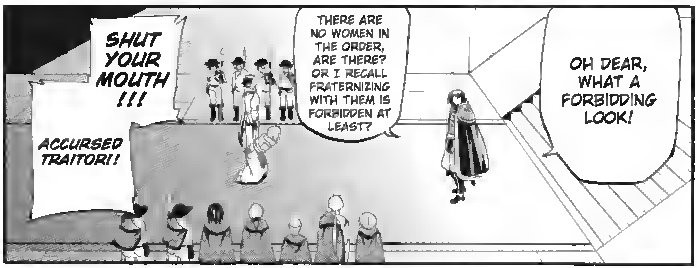
THIS IS IT, EH...?
HMM...
OH.
YES, THAT'S IT. THE BOX.
THANK YOU, YOUR MAJESTY.
I MEAN, WELL DONE! YOU TRAVELED A LONG WAY FOR THIS.
AND YOUR REWARD WILL BE FORTH-COMING.
DIDN'T I ORDER HIM TO BRING ME THE CHURCH'S WISDOM?
NOW WHERE IS THE OTHER ONE?
YOUR ...
I'M FOND OF THOSE WHO ARE COMPETENT AT THEIR DUTIES.
I WAS RIGHT IN GRANTING YOU WISDOM AND ELEVATING YOUR RANK!
GYA-HA-HA!

SWISH
YOUR SERVANT, AVEYASH, HAS BROUGHT YOU...
...MAJESTY!!
FINISH
...THREE PIECES OF WISDOM!!
GONG
...A CHURCH APPLE THAT ACCOMPANIED ONE OF THEM!!!
AND NOT ONLY THAT, BUT...

SIGH..
HEH-HEH-HEH-HEH! I KNOW, RIGHT?
THOUGH STILL A FOOL...
YOU REALLY ARE A FOOL, BUT AT LEAST YOU'RE CAPABLE.
どよあ…
……
……
TAK
TAK
…I SUPPOSE I SHOULD LISTEN TO...
…WHAT YOUR SOUVENIR HAS TO SAY.
WELL …


ARGAN-BONE!!
HOW DOES IT FEEL TO BE TIED UP...
...FRIAR?

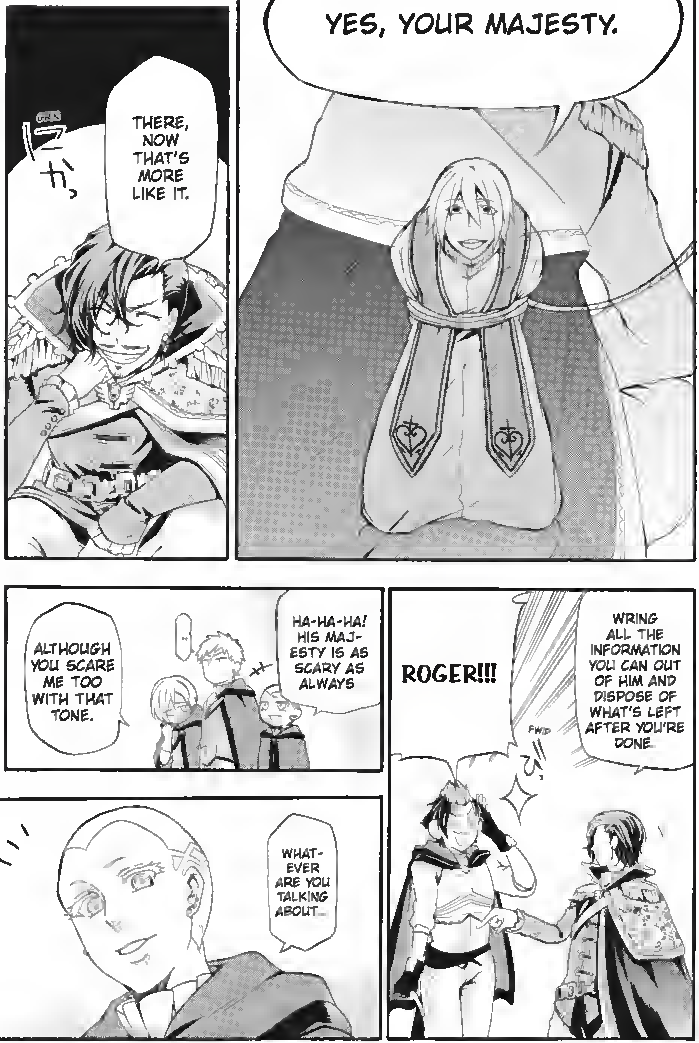
ｶｯ…
HELLO THERE


SHUT YOUR MOUTH!!!
ACCURSED TRAITOR!!
THERE ARE NO WOMEN IN THE ORDER, ARE THERE? OR I RECALL FRATERNIZING WITH THEM IS FORBIDDEN AT LEAST?
OH DEAR, WHAT A FORBIDDING LOOK!

THE INHERITORS ARE THOSE WHO BELIEVE IN HIM AND THOSE WHO PRAY FOR THE HAPPINESS OF ALL!!
GOD DOES NOT MEAN FOR ONES SUCH AS YOU TO POSSESS THE WISDOM!!!

I WOULD MUCH RATHER HEAR...
OH, YES, YES...
I'VE HEARD IT ALL BEFORE FROM YOU PEOPLE...
...AND I'M SICK OF IT!
THE HAKU
WHO HOLDS THE WISDOM? WHAT KIND OF POWERS DO THEY HAVE? HOW MANY PIECES? WILL YOU TELL ME?
...ABOUT THE UNKNOWN THAT THE CHURCH HAS.
TORTURE ME, DO AS YOU WILL, BUT I WON'T TALK!!
HA! NEVER!
BUT DON'T WORRY, I WON'T HAVE TO TORTURE YOU...
TORTURE?
YOU FRIARS HAVE THE MOST ACTIVE IMAGINATIONS.

YOU'LL WILLINGLY TELL ME EVERYTHING I WISH TO KNOW, WON'T YOU?


YES, YOUR MAJESTY.
THERE, NOW THAT'S MORE LIKE IT.
ALTHOUGH YOU SCARE ME TOO WITH THAT TONE.
HA-HA-HA! HIS MAJESTY IS AS SCARY AS ALWAYS
ROGER!!!
WRING ALL THE INFORMATION YOU CAN OUT OF HIM AND DISPOSE OF WHAT'S LEFT AFTER YOU'RE DONE.
WHATEVER ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT...

MM? WHAT IS IT, ETHICA?
YOUR MAJESTY ...
SQUEAK
SQUEAK
I LIKE THE SOUND OF THAT!!!
IT SEEMS SOMEONE WITH WISDOM IS IN TOWN.
AND THEY DON'T APPEAR TO BE AN AGENT OF THE CHURCH...
FOR STARTERS, HAVE THE SOLDIERS DO SOMETHING ABOUT THEM! USE AS MANY AS YOU NEED!!
SWISH
IF THEY'RE OPEN TO GIVING IT UP, BUY IT AT THEIR ASKING PRICE!! OTHERWISE, TAKE THEM INTO CUSTODY AND BRING THEM TO ME!!
YES, YOUR MAJESTY!

IT'S A WASTE FOR AN AVERAGE CITIZEN TO BE A WISEMAN.
ESPECIALLY WHEN I NEED AS MUCH WISDOM AS POSSIBLE TO TAKE DOWN THE CHURCH.
SQUEEZE
HA!
IT'S FINALLY GETTING INTER-ESTING AROUND HERE.
ATTAINING THIS THRONE IS JUST A STEPPING-STONE.
I WILL OBTAIN ALL OF THE WISDOM... OMISCIENCE AND OMNIPOTENCE ...
...AND THEN I'LL TAKE THE WORLD!!

I WAS TOLD TO KEEP IT A SECRET AND I HAVE...
...BUT SINCE IT'S COME TO THIS, I HAD NO CHOICE BUT TO TELL YOU.

SET AND NOAH...
SERI-OUSLY !?

SURELY IT CAN'T BE THAT SURPRISING?
IT JUST MEANS THAT YOU TWO AREN'T THE ONLY ONES WHO ARE SPECIAL.

YOU'VE GOTTA BE KIDDING ME!

WELL, THAT BEING SAID...
...I CAN'T IMAGINE SET AND NOAH ACTING RASHLY.
STILL, IF SOMETHING DOES HAPPEN, IT'LL BE TOO LATE. SO I WANT YOU TWO TO FIND THEM.
EVEN IF THERE IS NO TROUBLE, JUST BRING THEM HOME, PLEASE.
UNDER-STOOD.
...WE WERE SO FULL OF OUR-SELVES.
YEAH. BUT THEY DIDN'T SAY A WORD ABOUT IT.
JUST BE SAFE, YOU GUYS...

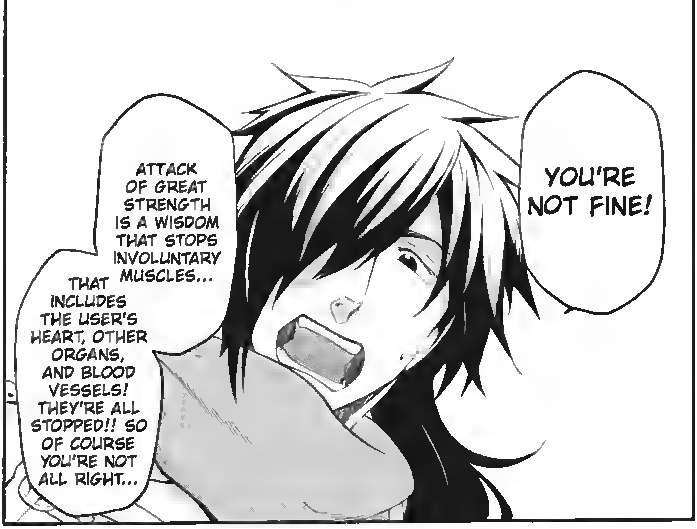
RING
THUD
THUD
THUD
THE MALE HAS THE WISDOM!!
DO NOT LET THEM GET AWAY!!
THEY'RE TRYING TO LEAVE TOWN!!
THERE THEY ARE!! THIS WAY!
GASP!
HOW DID THEY KNOW WE WERE APPLES!?
WE DIDN'T DO ANYTHING !!

NOAH !!!
BUT HOW!?
THEY EVEN KNOW I'M THE KEEPER OF THE WISDOM ...
GOT IT...!
LEND ME THE WISDOM!
I'LL TAKE THAT DOWN!!
UN-KNOWN NUMBER 62:
ATTACK OF GREAT STRENGTH, ACHILLES!

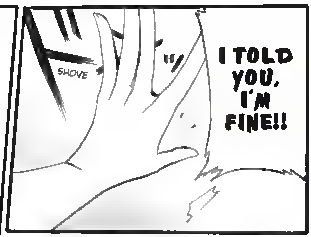
...SO I CAN LET LOOSE WITH AN ATTACK THAT EXCEEDS HUMAN LIMITS!!!
I CAN CONSCIOUSLY FREEZE ALL THE MUSCLES IN MY BODY, INCLUDING THE INVOLUNTARY MUSCLES...
...WHICH LETS ME CONCENTRATE ALL MUSCLE ACTIVITY TO ONE AREA...
WHOOSH

DAMMIT... THE ROAD...
THEY ESCAPED INTO THE FOREST!!
THE FOREST!! EVERYONE TO THE FOREST!!
HUFF!
HUFF!
HUFF!

THUMP
Fly.
HUFF
HUFF
!
...I'M FINE...
COME ON...IF WE DON'T GET AWAY QUICKLY...
SWAP
SET!!
GRAB


YOU'RE NOT FINE!
ATTACK OF GREAT STRENGTH IS A WISDOM THAT STOPS INVOLUNTARY MUSCLES...
THAT INCLUDES THE USER'S HEART, OTHER ORGANS, AND BLOOD VESSELS! THEY'RE ALL STOPPED!! SO OF COURSE YOU'RE NOT ALL RIGHT...

IF WE LINGER HERE, OUR PURSUERS WILL CATCH UP... SO WHY...
EVEN THOUGH I DESTROYED THE BRIDGE, IT ONLY BOUGHT US SOME TIME...


SHOVE
I TOLD YOU, I'M FINE!!

SLUMP
ガクン
SET!!

LEAVE ME HERE. YOU GO.
WHA...
GLENCH
NOAH...
...WON'T MY LEGS MOVE!?

AT THIS RATE, WE'LL BOTH BE CAPTURED ...
AND IF THAT HAPPENS, THEY'LL KILL YOU AND TAKE THE WISDOM, NOAH.
FOOLISH TALK? I'D CALL IT A SENSIBLE JUDGMENT.
WHAT KIND OF FOOLISH TALK IS THAT!? DO YOU REALLY THINK I WOULD ABANDON YOU?

WE HAVE TO GET OUR HANDS ON ALL THE WISDOM IN THE WORLD!! THEN WE HAVE TO GET RID OF IT!!
WE CAN'T ALLOW THAT!!

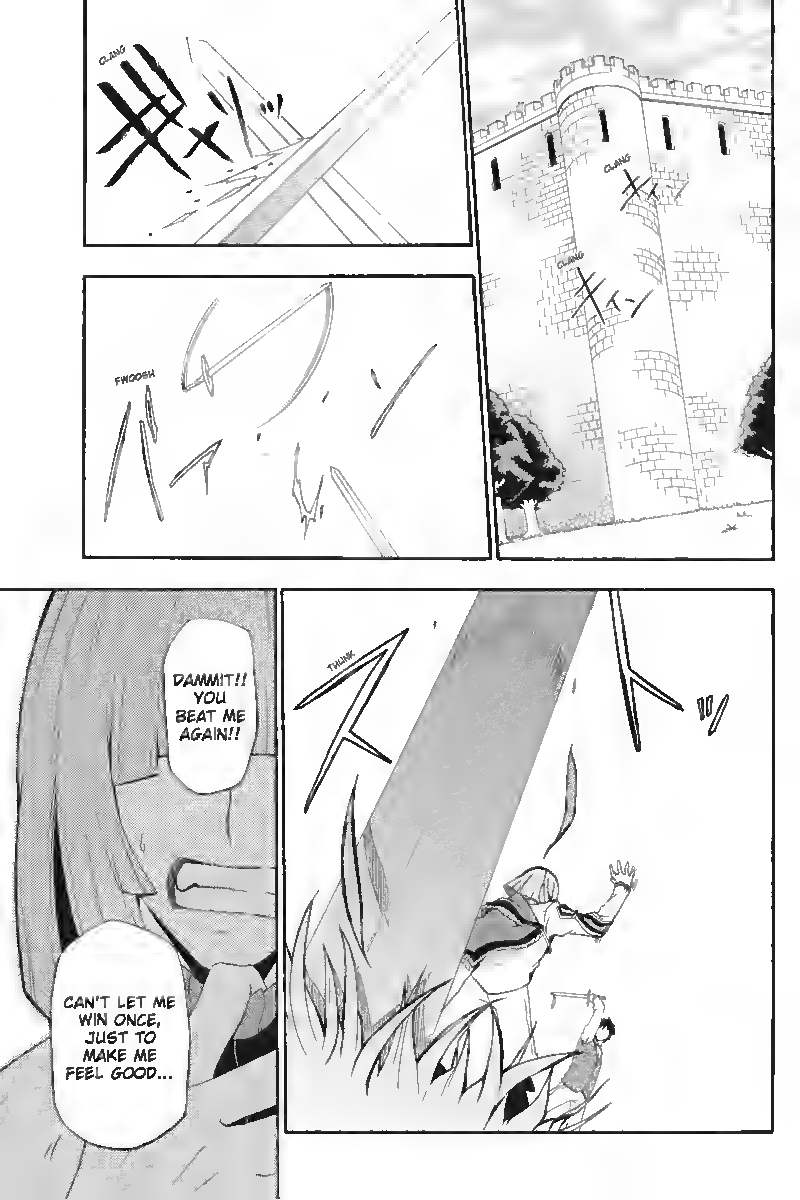
LEAVE ME HERE AND ESCAPE, NOAH.
I CAN'T GO ALONG WITH THAT.
BUFF
THAT'S WHY...
THAT'S WHY THIS ISN'T...
...A REQUEST, BUT AN ORDER.
BUZZ
...BUT I CAN'T FOLLOW THAT ORDER...
...EVEN IF YOU'RE THE ONE GIVING IT.
YOU TWO ARE SO MUCH ALIKE...
HE TOLD ME THE SAME THING THEN..
FWISH
I CAN'T FORGET WHO YOU ARE... WHAT YOU ARE...
...SET. OR RATHER ...
BSN

PRINCESS CERIDIANT OF IBLIS.

...CERIDIANT.

Ἀχιλλεύς

UNKNOWN

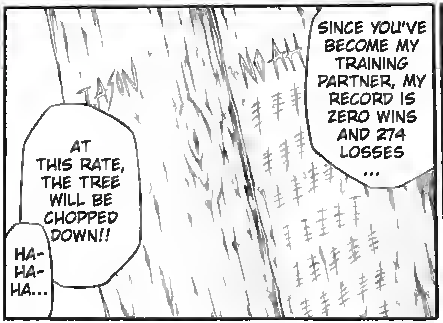

CLANG
CLANG
CLANG
FWOOSH
DAMMIT!! YOU BEAT ME AGAIN!!
CAN'T LET ME WIN ONCE, JUST TO MAKE ME FEEL GOOD...
THUNK

M-MY APOLOGIES, PRINCE JASON..
HOWEVER... THAT... WOULDN'T REALLY BE TRAINING THEN...
MUTTER
MUTTER

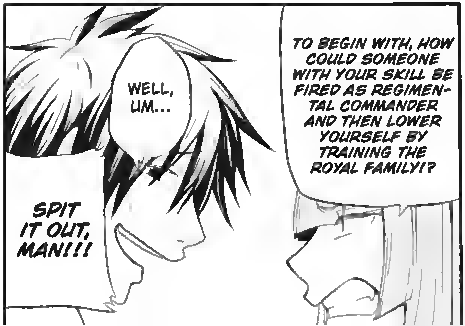
...NOAH!?

Chapter 8:
Shepherd's Purse (I Offer You My All)

SHEESH
...


SINCE YOU'VE BECOME MY TRAINING PARTNER, MY RECORD IS ZERO WINS AND 274 LOSSES
...
AT THIS RATE, THE TREE WILL BE CHOPPED DOWN!!
HA-HA-HA...

CHUK

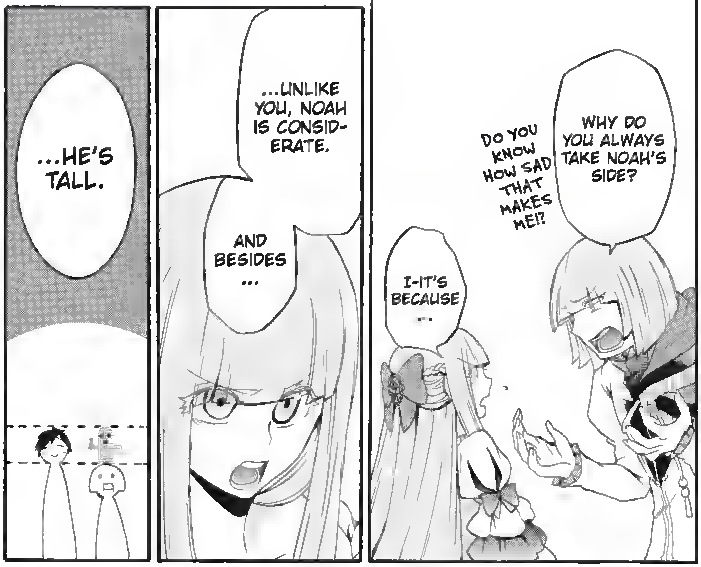

TO BEGIN WITH, HOW COULD SOMEONE WITH YOUR SKILL BE FIRED AS REGIMENTAL COMMANDER AND THEN LOWER YOURSELF BY TRAINING THE ROYAL FAMILY!?
WELL, UM...
SPIT IT OUT, MAN!!!

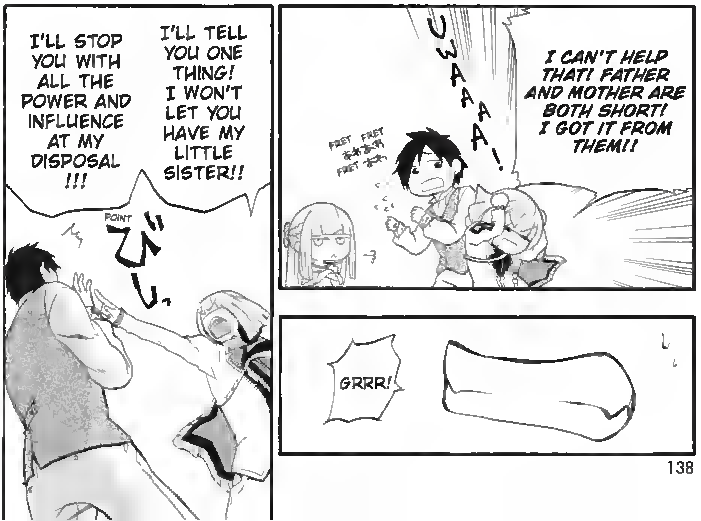
STOP LAUGHING!!
SNORT
YIKES!

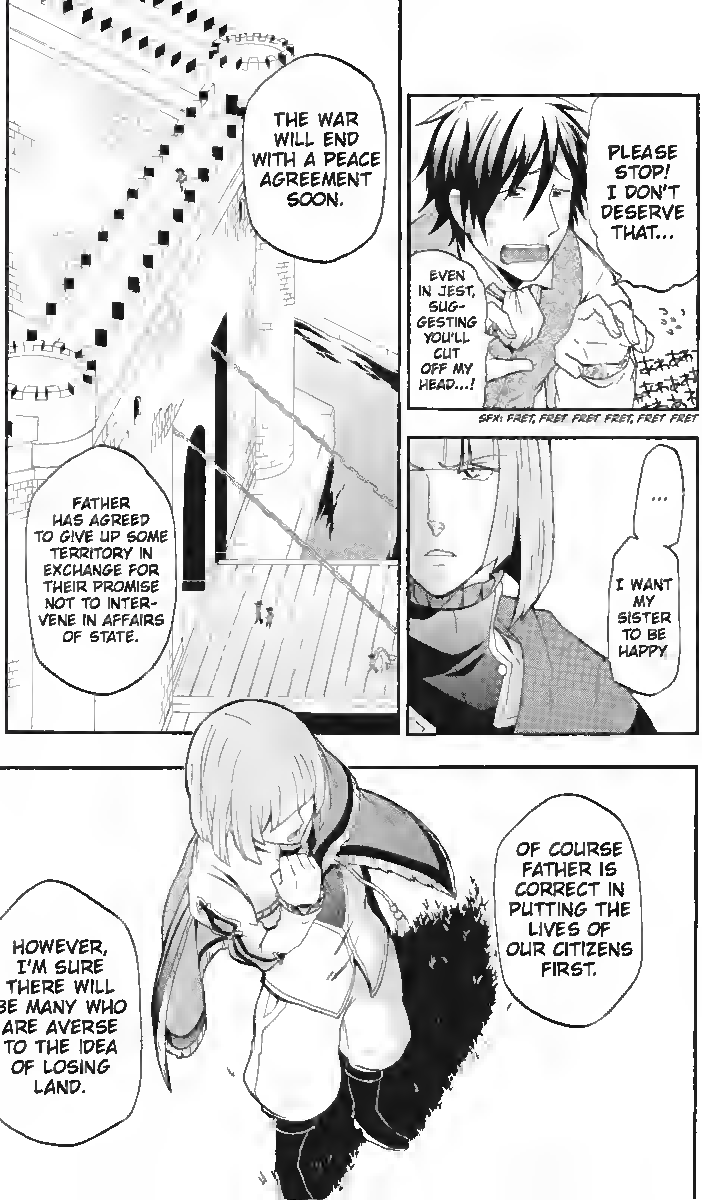
I-I'M AFRAID TO STAB ANOTHER PERSON WITH A SWORD...
WHEN I IMAGINE THE OTHER PERSON'S PAIN OF BEING RUN THROUGH WITH MY SWORD...
...MY HANDS JUST START TO QUIVER.
.....
HA!!
THAT'S A COWARDLY REASON, AND YET IT FITS YOU PERFECTLY!!
I SHUDDER TO THINK SOMEONE LIKE THAT WAS ENTRUSTED TO BE A LEADER, EVEN FOR A SHORT PERIOD!!
BROTHER !!!
I'M SORRY.
I'M SORRY
SLOW
TH...
THAT VOICE...!

HA HA-HA! MY LITTLE SISTER IS SO BASHFUL!
PUSH
PUSH
PUSH
HEY!!
LET... GO... OF... ME!!
HUG
AAAH!! AS ALWAYS, YOU'RE AS BEAUTIFUL AS A FLOWER'S PETAL!! I'VE MISSED YOU, LITTLE SISTER!!
CERIDIANT!!
I'M NOT BEING MEAN!! I'M JUST POINTING OUT HIS COWARDLY NATURE...
BROTHER!! DON'T BE SO MEAN TO NOAH!!
NOAH IS NO COWARD!

?
WHISPER
HE'S JUST KIND...
BONK
UNGH!
STOP IT THIS INSTANT !!
CERIDI-ANT!
YOUUU, A MERE VASSAL, DARE OGLE THE ROYAL PRINCESS, MY LITTLE SISTER...
WHOOOO
THE PUNISHMENT IS BEING DRAGGED THROUGH THE STREETS, FOLLOWED BY BEHEADING
I SAID IT'S A MISUNDER STANDING

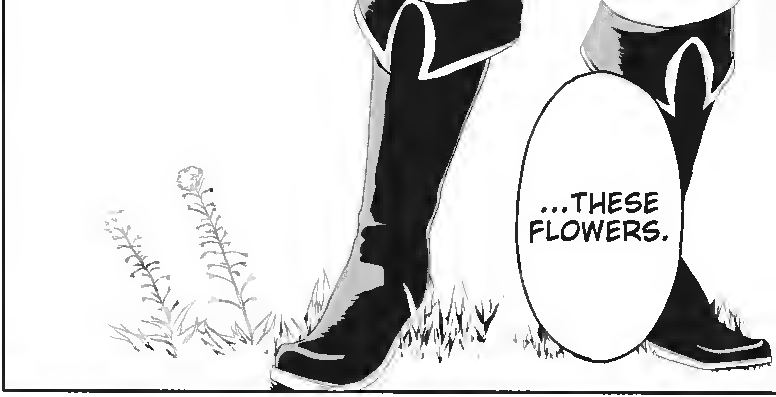

...HE'S TALL.
...UNLIKE YOU, NOAH IS CONSIDERATE.
AND BESIDES ...
I-IT'S BECAUSE ...
DO YOU KNOW HOW SAD THAT MAKES ME!?
WHY DO YOU ALWAYS TAKE NOAH'S SIDE?

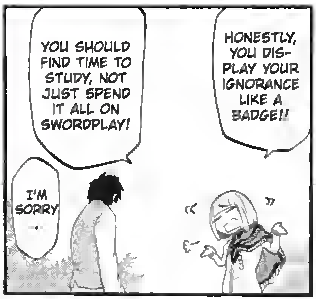

I'LL STOP YOU WITH ALL THE POWER AND INFLUENCE AT MY DISPOSAL !!!
I'LL TELL YOU ONE THING! I WON'T LET YOU HAVE MY LITTLE SISTER!!
POINT
びし。
うぁぁぁ!
I CAN'T HELP THAT! FATHER AND MOTHER ARE BOTH SHORT! I GOT IT FROM THEM!!
GRRR!

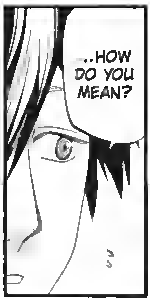

THE WAR WILL END WITH A PEACE AGREEMENT SOON.
FATHER HAS AGREED TO GIVE UP SOME TERRITORY IN EXCHANGE FOR THEIR PROMISE NOT TO INTERVENE IN AFFAIRS OF STATE.
PLEASE STOP! I DON'T DESERVE THAT...
EVEN IN JEST, SUGGESTING YOU'LL CUT OFF MY HEAD...!
SFX: FRET, FRET FRET FRET, FRET FRET
...
I WANT MY SISTER TO BE HAPPY.
OF COURSE FATHER IS CORRECT IN PUTTING THE LIVES OF OUR CITIZENS FIRST.
HOWEVER, I'M SURE THERE WILL BE MANY WHO ARE AVERSE TO THE IDEA OF LOSING LAND.

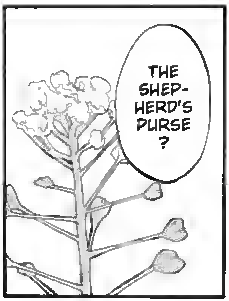
AND IF THEY REBEL, AS THE PRINCE OF THIS LAND...
...I WISH TO PROTECT OUR PEOPLE AND MY FAMILY!
AS FOR MY SISTER ...
...THE PRINCESS OF THIS LAND, I WOULD LIKE TO MARRY HER OFF SOMEWHERE WHERE SHE CAN BE HAPPY.

I FEEL THE SAME WAY.
I WILL PUT MY LIFE ON THE LINE TO PROTECT THIS COUNTRY. . TO PROTECT YOU TWO.
MY FAMILY WAS CAUGHT UP IN A POWER STRUGGLE BETWEEN NOBLES
WE ALMOST LOST EVERY-THING BASED ON GROUND-LESS CHARGES...
THE ONLY ONE WHO LOOKED AT US WITH AN UNPREJU-DICED EYE WAS YOU, MY PRINCE.
THAT IS WHY I WANT TO REPAY YOUR KINDNESS WITH MY LIFE.
...YOU'RE JUST LIKE...


...THESE FLOWERS.


YOU SHOULD FIND TIME TO STUDY, NOT JUST SPEND IT ALL ON SWORDPLAY!
HONESTLY, YOU DISPLAY YOUR IGNORANCE LIKE A BADGE!!
I'M SORRY.


..HOW DO YOU MEAN?


THE SHEPHERD'S PURSE?

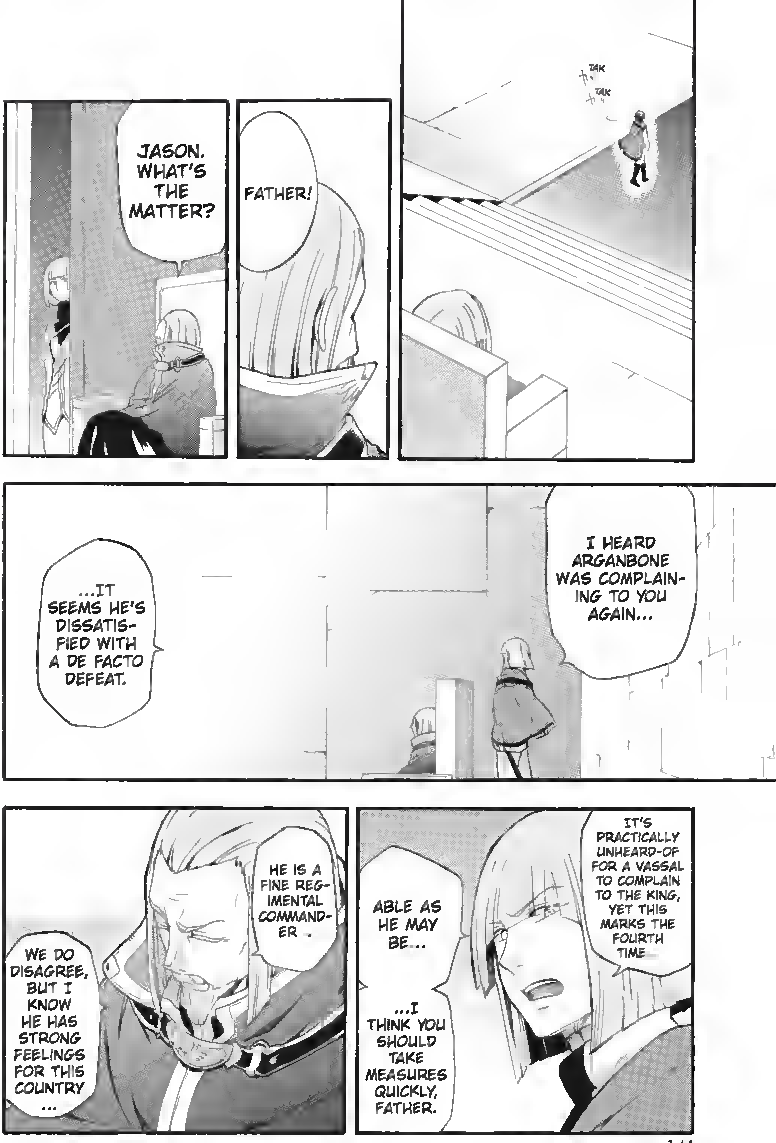
MY LORD! THE ARGANBONE ARMY HAS JUST RETURNED...
WHAT IS IT?

PRINCE JASON!

NOT TO SEE FATHER AGAIN?
YES, MY LORD... THEY ARE QUARRELING AS WE SPEAK...
...AGAIN THAT BLASTED
SCRATCH
SCRATCH
ALL RIGHT. I'LL BE ON MY WAY.
NOAH, ESCORT CERIDIANT TO HER CHAMBER.
SPIN
AS YOU WISH.
YANK
WAIT!!
WHOA!
D-DON'T LET YOUR MOUTH GET YOU IN TROUBLE, BROTHER. YOU HAVE A SHARP TONGUE...
...AND THAT REGIMENTAL COMMANDER SCARES ME.
SMIRK

PAT
I'M GOING TO MAKE YOU AND THIS COUNTRY HAPPY.
PUT YOUR MIND AT EASE, CERIDIANT.
I SWEAR IT!

WHY PULL BACK NOW !?
WHY!?
WE SHOULD FIGHT, YOUR MAJESTY, EVEN IF IT MEANS SOME ARE SACRIFICED!!
I HAVE ALREADY MADE UP MY MIND....
THAT IS ALL FOR TODAY..
...
ARGANBONE.
!

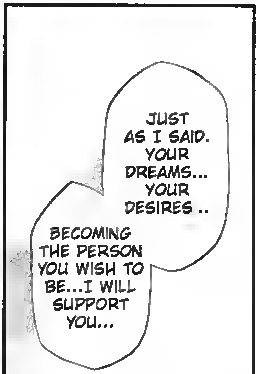

JASON, WHAT'S THE MATTER?
FATHER!
TAK
TAK
I HEARD ARGANBONE WAS COMPLAINING TO YOU AGAIN...
...IT SEEMS HE'S DISSATISFIED WITH A DE FACTO DEFEAT.
IT'S PRACTICALLY UNHEARD-OF FOR A VASSAL TO COMPLAIN TO THE KING, YET THIS MARKS THE FOURTH TIME...
ABLE AS HE MAY BE...
...I THINK YOU SHOULD TAKE MEASURES QUICKLY, FATHER.
HE IS A FINE REGIMENTAL COMMANDER.
WE DO DISAGREE, BUT I KNOW HE HAS STRONG FEELINGS FOR THIS COUNTRY...

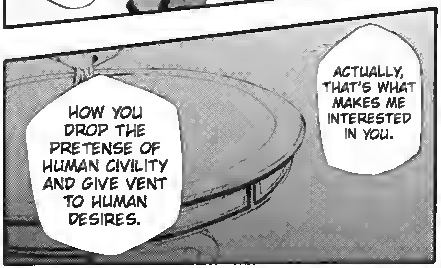
I DO NOT WISH TO REJECT THAT...
AHHH...
TIP
WHY CAN'T HE UNDERSTAND ...?
DRIP
LOSING THE LIVES OF MERE THOUSANDS OF SOLDIERS VERSUS LOSING TERRITORY ...
WHEN YOU COMPARE THEM, THE ANSWER IS OBVIOUS ...
WHAT THIS COUNTRY NEEDS...
CLUNK
...MORE THAN THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE NOW...
IS TENS OF THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE LATER.

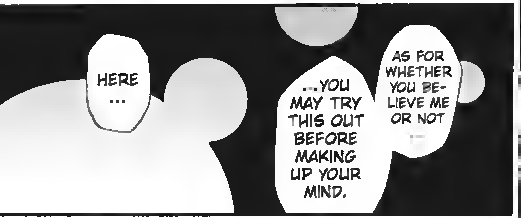
THAT IS A VERY SIMPLE WAY OF THINKING ABOUT IT.
SWOOSH
SWISH
WHO'S THERE?
UFU
FUHAHA
BE AT EASE... I AM NOT YOUR ENEMY.
IN FACT, YOU MAY EVEN THINK OF ME AS YOUR PATRON.

NO ONE'S HERE...A HALLUCINATION? HAVE I DRUNK TOO MUCH...?
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?

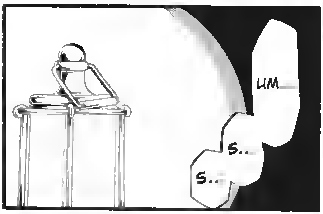
DON'T MAKE ME LAUGH.
IN WHAT WORLD IS THERE A PERSON WILLING TO BACK SOMEONE LIKE ME?


JUST AS I SAID. YOUR DREAMS... YOUR DESIRES ..
BECOMING THE PERSON YOU WISH TO BE...I WILL SUPPORT YOU...


ACTUALLY, THAT'S WHAT MAKES ME INTERESTED IN YOU.
HOW YOU DROP THE PRETENSE OF HUMAN CIVILITY AND GIVE VENT TO HUMAN DESIRES.

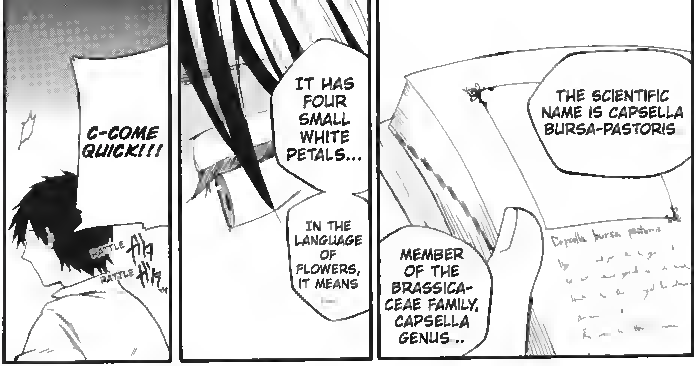

HERE ...
...YOU MAY TRY THIS OUT BEFORE MAKING UP YOUR MIND.
AS FOR WHETHER YOU BELIEVE ME OR NOT ...

...AS YOUR PATRON.

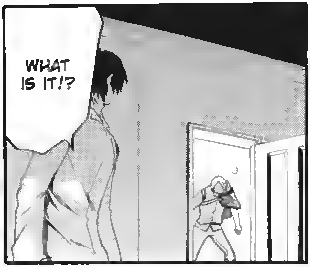

UM...
S..
S..

SHEPHERD'S PURSE...UM...
HERE IT IS.

...HAVE SOME OF MY WISDOM.


C-COME QUICK!!!
RATTLE
RATTLE
IT HAS FOUR SMALL WHITE PETALS...
IN THE LANGUAGE OF FLOWERS, IT MEANS
THE SCIENTIFIC NAME IS CAPSELLA BURSA-PASTORIS
MEMBER OF THE BRASSICA-CEAE FAMILY, CAPSELLA GENUS ..

...HAS REBELLED!
HUH?


WHAT IS IT!?

ARGAN-BONE...
HIM...

CRACKLE
CRACKLE
YOUR MAJES-TY!!
PRINCE !!

HHH...
WHY IS THIS HAPPEN-ING...?

ARE YOU HERE!?
PRIN-CESS CERIDI-ANT!!

!
JUST

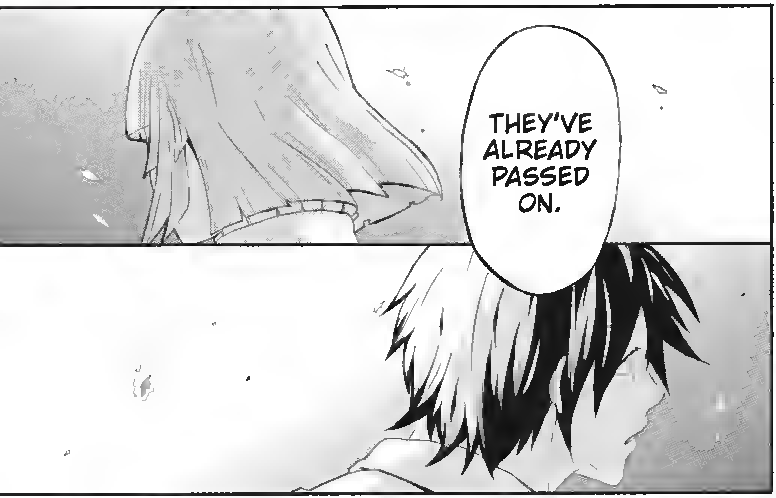
THANK GOOD-NESS...! ARE YOU HURT!?
NO, NOT BADLY.

PRINCE!!

HUNDREDS OF OUR SOLDIERS ARE LOYAL TO ARGANBONE NOW.
HUN-DREDS!?
WHY ...?
WHY HAS THIS HAP-PENED ...!?
PARDON ME, BUT I CAN'T IMAGINE THERE BEING THAT MANY SOLDIERS SO DEVOTED TO ARGANBONE THEY WOULD BETRAY HIS MAJESTY...!
THERE MUST BE SOME MISTAKE!
THAT'S RIGHT!
SWISH
NONE OF THEM...
...WERE IN THEIR RIGHT MINDS!!

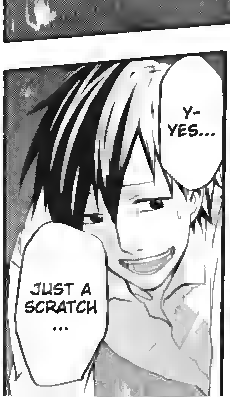
ALL THE SOLDIERS FOLLOWING HIM...
...HAD EYES LIKE DEAD MEN!!
IT'S AS IF THEY'VE BEEN ENCHANTED !!
ENCHANTED? THAT'S CRAZY...
WELL, I DON'T KNOW!
AND THIS ISN'T THE TIME TO PONDER IT!! WE HAVE TO GET EVERYONE TO A SAFE PLACE...

NEVER MIND MY FATHER AND MOTHER.
WAIT, NOAH.
DASH!
ALL RIGHT, I'LL GO TO THEIR MAJESTIES !!

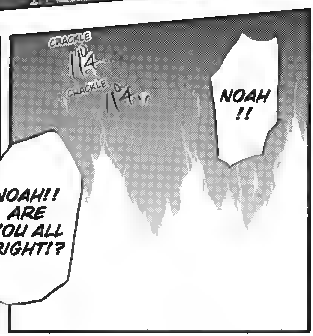

THEY'VE ALREADY PASSED ON.

NOAH !!
!!
YES, PLEASE!! SHE SHOULD STILL BE SAFE. I'LL...
TH-THEN I'LL GO TO THE PRINCESS, WHO LIVES APART

THE


Y-YES...
JUST A SCRATCH ...

UNH
NOAH!! ARE YOU ALL RIGHT!?


CRACKLE
NOAH!!

PRINCE !!!
SWISH
YOU SHIELDED ME!? WHY DID YOU DO SOMETHING SO STUPID!?
STUPID...? DO YOU KNOW WHOM YOU'RE TALKING TO...?

I'LL GET THIS OFF OF YOU IN NO TIME!! UNTIL THEN, PLEASE, JUST HANG IN THERE!!
WHAM
DAM-MIT!!
CRACKLE
CRACKLE
CRACKLE
CRACKLE
ESCAPE, NOAH!

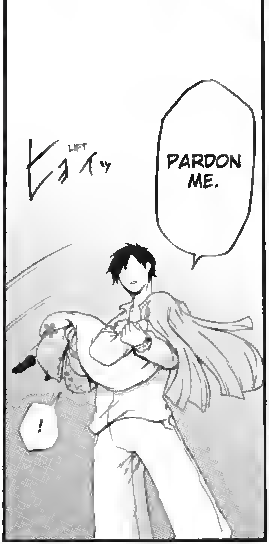
I JUST GAVE YOU AN ORDER!!
AND I SAID I CAN'T OBEY IT!!!
THAT'S AN ORDER. GET AWAY FROM HERE, NOAH!!
I CAN'T GO ALONG WITH IT!!
CAN'T YOU UNDER-STAND WHY I PROTECTED YOU JUST NOW!?!

AND IF WE DAWDLE, OUR PURSUERS WOULD CATCH UP AND IT'D BE ALL OVER FOR THE THREE OF US.
EVEN IF YOU COULD MOVE THIS TREE, I COULDN'T RUN.
IF I'D BEEN STRONGER, I WOULD'VE GLADLY LEFT YOU BEHIND...
... BUT...
DON'T GET THE WRONG IDEA. THIS IS ALL FOR THE LOVE OF CERIDIANT.
...I'VE NEVER EVEN BEATEN YOU ONCE.

I JUST THOUGHT SHE WOULD BE HAPPIER IF YOU WERE THE ONE TO LIVE.
CRUNCH
CRACKLE
CRACKLE
THINGS I WANTED TO DO FOR HER... THINGS I WANTED HER TO BE ABLE TO DO...
SO MANY THINGS, LIKE STARS IN THE SKY...
BUT NOW... I DON'T THINK... I CAN DO ANYTHING... FOR HER...

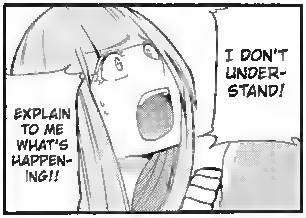
I HAVE NO CHOICE...
...BUT TO LEAVE IT TO YOU.

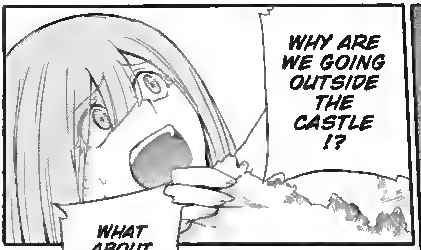
ガタン
RATTLE
NOAH!!
SOMETHING'S GOING ON OUTSIDE!! WHAT IS...
TAK
!
NOAH... YOU'RE BADLY BURNED !!
IT'S NOTHING. NOW LET'S GO.
GO?
WHERE?

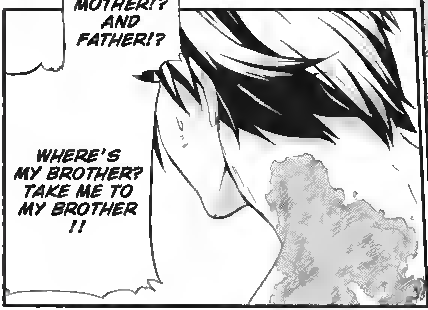

PARDON ME.
!

WAIT!
...OUTSIDE THE CASTLE. COME ON.

...


EXPLAIN TO ME WHAT'S HAPPENING!!
I DON'T UNDERSTAND!


WHY ARE WE GOING OUTSIDE THE CASTLE!?


WHAT ABOUT MOTHER!? AND FATHER!?
WHERE'S MY BROTHER? TAKE ME TO MY BROTHER!!

HEY, NOAH!! PUT ME DOWN!!
WHAT IN HEAVEN'S NAME HAPPENED!?

I'M LEAVING THINGS IN YOUR HANDS, BUT THERE'S ONE MORE ORDER...NO...

THIS IS ME ASKING A FAVOR OF A FRIEND...

I WANT YOU TO PASS THIS MESSAGE ON TO CERIDIANT... AND...

...DON'T YOU DARE LET HER MEET ME AGAIN UNTIL THEN!

SO YOU SEE, SET...
RUSTLE
...MY FRIEND...
...ASKED ME FOR A FAVOR.
SO I JUST CAN'T HEED...

...YOUR ORDER TO ESCAPE ON MY OWN!
I OFFER YOU...
...MY ALL.

SWISH
GLEAM
SNATCH
FWOOSH
CLANG
FWISH

CLANG
CLANG
TWITCH
WHOOSH
FWIP
AAAAR-RGH!!
WHILLIP
FWISH
THUK

IF I JUST KEEP THEM FROM MOVING... IT'LL BE FINE.
IF I AIM FOR THEIR LEGS, I WON'T HAVE TO KILL THEM...
...THAN I THOUGHT.
ON TOP OF THAT, I'VE LOST MORE STRENGTH...
...MY HAND IS QUIVERING. MY SWINGS ARE OFF.
BUT EVEN SO...
WHUMP
...LET HER DIE HERE...
BUT I CAN'T...

GRAB
ガレ
DASH
...AND YET...o0!

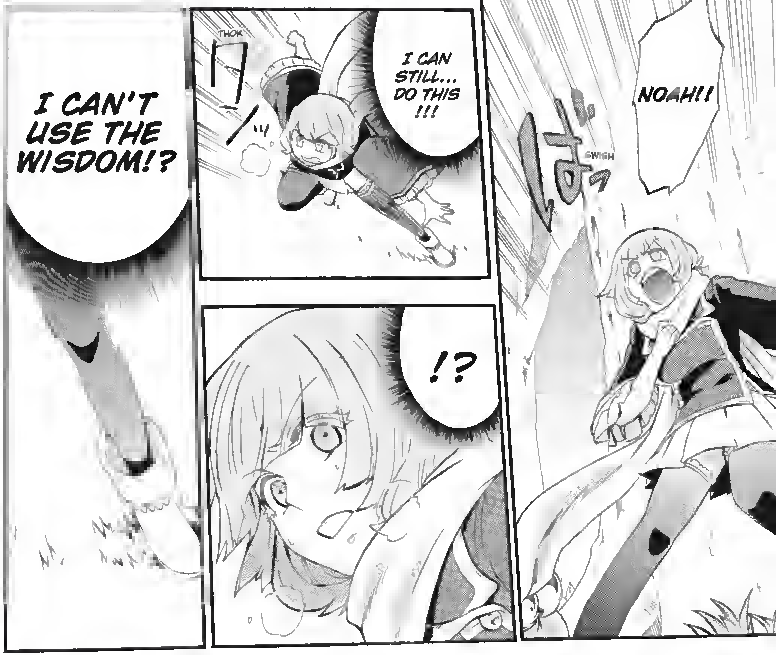
THIS IS AS FAR AS THE CARRIAGE WILL GO !?
HEY, OX!!
THUD
DAM-MIT!!
GUESS THEY DIDN'T WAIT FOR US TO GET THE PARTY STARTED, HUH? SHEESH!!
GRIT

LET'S GET A MOVE ON, IVAN!!

Διόνυσος

UNKNOWN

ポタ
ポタ


I CAN'T USE THE WISDOM!?
THUD
I CAN STILL... DO THIS !!!
!?
SWISH
NOAH!!

REMEMBER WHAT I SAID...?
...BUT DON'T WORRY.
I WITHDREW PEMISSION FOR THE WISDOM

Chapter 9:
Under Separate Stars
(Falling Star)

...BUT IF NOT SWINGING THIS SWORD...
I BARELY HAVE ANY STRENGTH LEFT IN MY ARM...
...AND I STILL JUST HATE STABBING PEOPLE...
...MEANS I CAN'T PROTECT ANYTHING...
SQUEEZE
KU

...THEN I'LL—
GLARE
GASP
SHIFF
!!?
SWISH

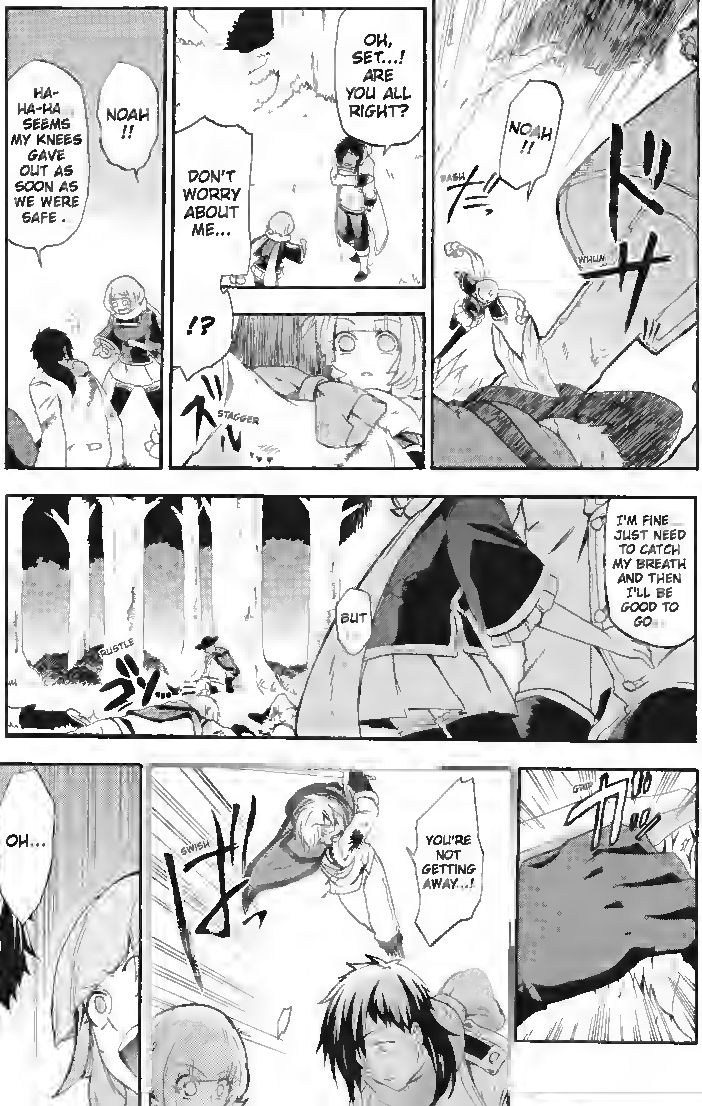
WHOOSH
ASH
AAAAH!
AAAAH
WHU
UNGH!
WH-WHAT THE HELL HAPPENED? SUDDENLY HE HAS A LOOK IN HIS EYE...
SWISH
CRACK

CREAK
YOU'RE THE FORMER REGIMENT COMMANDER, AREN'T YOU!?
THAT FACE... AND THAT SWORDMANSHIP...I KNEW I'D SEEN IT BEFORE SOMEWHERE...
HA-HA! IT'S FUNNY. YOU ONCE PROTECTED THIS COUNTRY AS A LEADER...
...AND NOW YOU'RE A REBEL WITH THE NATION AS YOUR ENEMY!!
PUSH
CLANG
CREAK
THAT'S TRUE...
... BUT RIGHT NOW...MORE THAN THIS COUNTRY...
CREAK

...THERE'S A FEELING I WANT TO HOLD ON TO...
...AND A PERSON I WANT TO PROTECT!

SO...
TWITCH
...I'M NOT...
SLASH
...SWINGING A SWORD TO KILL...
!?
WHAM!
WHA..?

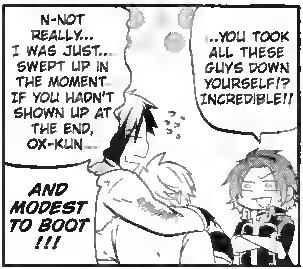
SLASH
...BUT TO PROTECT!!

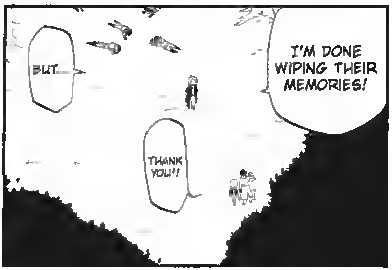

NOAH !!
DASH
WHUN
OH, SET...! ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
DON'T WORRY ABOUT ME...
!?
STAGGER
NOAH !!
HA-HA-HA SEEMS MY KNEES GAVE OUT AS SOON AS WE WERE SAFE.
I'M FINE... JUST NEED TO CATCH MY BREATH AND THEN I'LL BE GOOD TO GO...
BUT
RUSTLE
GRIP
YOU'RE NOT GETTING AWAY...!
SWISH
OH...

ZRAM
ズドーン
CRAP?
EEEK!
OH!
OX-KUN!?
HUH? WAIT, WHAT!?
IS IT ALL OVER!?
NO WAY!

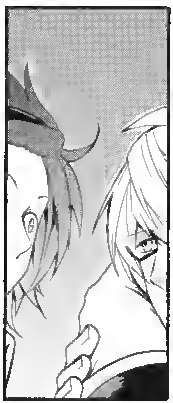
HEY!

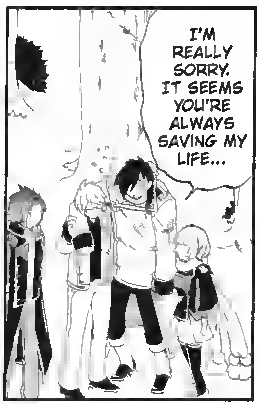
THE DIRECTOR TOLD US ABOUT YOU TWO.
SO WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?
.. OH

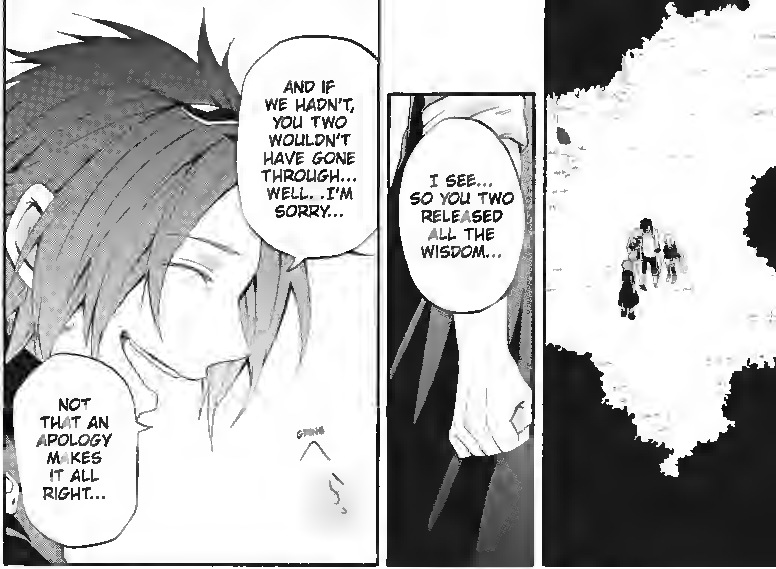

N-NOT REALLY... I WAS JUST... SWEPT UP IN THE MOMENT. IF YOU HADN'T SHOWN UP AT THE END, OX-KUN...
..YOU TOOK ALL THESE GUYS DOWN YOURSELF!? INCREDIBLE!!
AND MODEST TO BOOT !!!


I'M DONE WIPING THEIR MEMORIES!
BUT...
THANK YOU!!

HUH?
WE'RE THE ONES WHO HAVE TO APOLOGIZE.




I'M REALLY SORRY. IT SEEMS YOU'RE ALWAYS SAVING MY LIFE...


AND IF WE HADN'T, YOU TWO WOULDN'T HAVE GONE THROUGH... WELL...I'M SORRY...
NOT THAT AN APOLOGY MAKES IT ALL RIGHT...
GRIND
I SEE... SO YOU TWO RELEASED ALL THE WISDOM...

!
IT'S OKAY!
.....
BESIDES, THERE'S NO SENSE DWELLING ON THE PAST.
MORE IMPORTANTLY ...
SOMEBODY ELSE WOULD'VE OPENED THE BOX ANYWAY.

...I'M HAPPY THAT YOU RESCUED US HERE. THAT'S GOOD ENOUGH.
AND WE'LL LEAVE IT AT THAT!! COUNTER-ARGUMENTS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED!!
HMPH!
I'M A PRINCESS!
...SO SHE SAYS.
...THANKS!
GRIN

SFX RUMBLE RUMBLE RUMBLE RUMBLE RUMBLE
THAT'S TRUE!
WHEN WE GET BACK, WE'RE PROBABLY IN FOR THE LECTURE OF OUR LIVES...
UGH...
MM!? WH- WHAT'S WRONG!?
OH... BUT...
CHUCKLE
BUT... STILL...
...AT LEAST WE'LL ALL GET YELLED AT TOGETHER!
HUH? THIS'LL BE OUR SECOND TIME, Y'KNOW !?
OH, WHAT'S THE HARM?
THIS PLANET'S HARM FREE

IN OTHER WORDS...
YOU NOT ONLY LET THEM GET AWAY, YOU HAVE NO MEMORY OF IT?
YES, MAJESTY. IT'S AS IF ALL THE MEMORIES FROM THEN HAVE BEEN ERASED...
I SEE.
THEN I HAVE NO MORE USE FOR ANY OF YOU.
!
YOUR MAJESTY!! PLEASE!! PLEASE SHOW US MERCY!!!
RUSTLE
CLACK
CLACK
YOUR MAJESTY!! YOUR MAJESTY!!
YOU MIGHT AS WELL SAVE YOUR BREATH, FELLOW!! AFTER ALL...

THUD
...HIS MAJESTY ONLY LIKES...
!

CLANG
...PEOPLE WHO CAN DO THEIR JOB!!

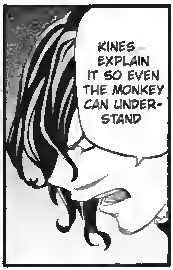
MERCY...? WHAT'S THAT? YOU'RE ASKING ME TO SAVE YOU?
?
AVEYASH-DONO!! PLEASE... PLEASE, SHOW MERCY...!!
SWISH
CHUK
IF THAT'S THE CASE, FORGET IT.
BECAUSE, SEE
WAIT FOR ME!!!
THUD
CLACK
CLACK
THUD
...I'M A GUY WHO GETS THE JOB DONE!!

NOT AT ALL!! I TOOK CARE OF ALL OF THEM AT MACH SPEED!!
AND ALSO!! LISTEN TO THIS, YOUR MAJESTY !!
IT'S YOUR FAULT FOR TAKING TOO LONG.
CLACK
CLACK!!
DON'T LEAVE ME BEHIND!!
HOP
HOP
THEY WERE BLATHERING SOMETHING ABOUT "MERCY", I DON'T KNOW!
KA-SHANG
KA-SHANG
SO I THINK IT WOULD BE NICE IF YOU GAVE ME A FEW WORDS OF PRAISE FOR MY SPEEDY WORK.
SILENCE, MONKEY.
CHUCKLE
WE SQUEEZED A LOT OF INTEL ABOUT WISDOM FROM THAT FRIAR. AMONG IT...
KINES. WHAT IS IT?
YOUR MAJESTY!

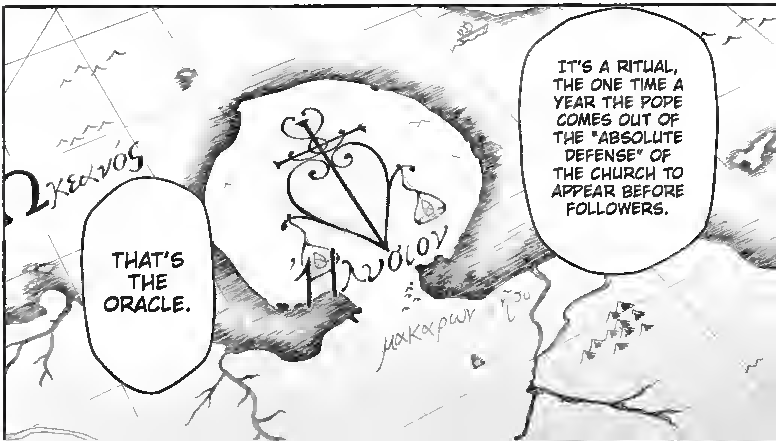
GIVE ME ALL THE DETAILS.
... THERE WAS INFORMATION ON THE ORACLE.
TO PUT IT SIMPLY, ONE WEEK FROM NOW...
...THE LOCATION OF THE ORACLE IS GOING TO CHANGE.

ORACLE ...
...BUT THIS YEAR, IT'LL BE AT THE SOUTH ORACULUM.
HEY WHAT'S AN ORACLE?
NORMALLY IT'S HELD AT THIS WEST ORACULUM EVERY YEAR...
ORACLE ?

...


KINES EXPLAIN IT SO EVEN THE MONKEY CAN UNDERSTAND

YIKES!
RAM


IT'S A RITUAL, THE ONE TIME A YEAR THE POPE COMES OUT OF THE "ABSOLUTE DEFENSE" OF THE CHURCH TO APPEAR BEFORE FOLLOWERS.
THAT'S THE ORACLE.

THE CHURCH POSSESSES WISDOM NUMBER THREE: FORTRESS OF THE GODDESS OF PROTECTION, ATHENA. AS LONG AS THEY HAVE IT, WE CAN'T TOUCH THEIR HEADQUARTERS. WE'RE AT A LOSS
THEY ALSO HAVE WISDOM NUMBER TWO, DIVINE PROTECTION OF THE GODDESS, HERA
SCRATCH
ゴシゴシ
SCRATCH
"ABSOLUTE DEFENSE"?
THE ONLY THING IS...
MAYBE!
THAT'S PRECISELY WHY THIS DAY IS SO IMPORTANT, THE ONE TIME THE POPE IS VULNERABLE.
DO YOU UNDERSTAND?
...THEY REALIZE IT TOO.
CHANGING THE LOCATION MAY BE MERE MISDIRECTION OR PERHAPS A TRAP...

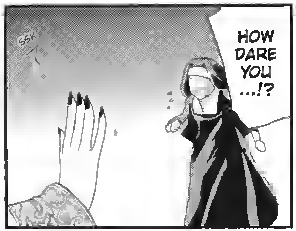
THUNK
EITHER WAY...

...FOR I HAVE NO INTENTION OF WAITING PATIENTLY FOR ANOTHER YEAR.

—THIS WILL BE OUR CHANCE. WE'LL STRIKE WITH EVERY-THING WE'VE GOT...

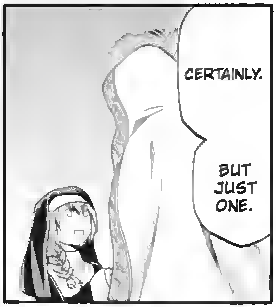
MAKE EVERY EFFORT TO ANNIHILATE THE CHURCH THERE AND THEN!!!
SWISH
YES, YOUR MAJESTY!!

YOUR HOLI-NESS ...
YOUR HOLI-NESS ...


HOW DARE YOU ...!?

GRAB
YOUR HOLI-NESS!
PLEASE BESTOW WISDOM ON ME TOO!

GLITTER
UNKNOWN NUMBER 21: TWINKLING OF THE GOD PLANET, URANUS.


CERTAINLY.
BUT JUST ONE.

WHEN YOU SEE A SHOOTING STAR, SAY A WISH FIVE TIMES.
THEN THE GOD OF THE STARS WILL GRANT IT.
WHAT..? I CAN'T DO THAT FIVE TIMES...
TRUE, IT MAY BE SLIGHTLY DIFFICULT.
BUT YOU MAY BE ABLE TO DO IT IF YOU DO YOUR BEST.
RUSTLE
YOUR HOLI-NESS!
I MUST GO. DON'T LOITER OUTSIDE SO MUCH AT NIGHT.
YES, YOUR HOLI-NESS!
RUSTLE
COMING.

...LESS THAN A WEEK LEFT BEFORE THE ORACLE.
CLACK
CLACK
DO YOU STILL THINK THE EMPIRE IS GOING TO MAKE A MOVE?
YES, THEY'LL PROBABLY TRY SOME-THING.
BUT I'M NOT WORRIED. WE HAVE EVERYONE.
AND OF COURSE, I HAVE YOU TOO.
THIS SYMBOL...
...AS LONG AS WE DON'T FORGET ABOUT IT, GOD WILL ALWAYS BE ON OUR SIDE.

ON THE RIGHT SIDE OF THE SCALE, TEARS. ON THE LEFT SIDE OF THE SCALE, BLOOD AND A SWORD PIERCING ITS OWN HEART.
THIS SPIRIT OF SELF-SACRIFICE IS THE ONLY PATH TO GOD...
DO NOT WORRY. THE ONE TO OBTAIN ALL THE WISDOM AND RULE THE WORLD...

TO BE CONTINUED IN UNKNOWN 3

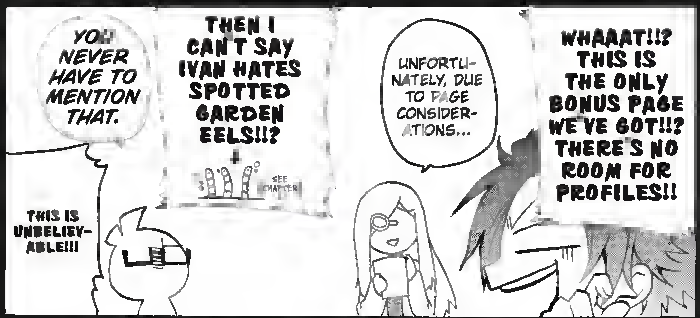
APOLOGY...

PROBABLY NOBODY IS PAYING ATTENTION TO THIS OLD MAN'S FASHION, BUT THE CUFFS OF HIS SHIRT CHANGED FROM CHAPTER 5 TO CHAPTER 6... SORRY...!

OH NO, MY SHIRT GOT DIRTY WHILE I WAS CARRYING OX-KUN IN, SO I CHANGED. I'M SOMETHING OF A CLEAN FREAK, SEE!
HA HA HA
IN THAT DUSTY OLD HOUSE!!?
IT'S JUST AN ART MISTAKE...!

AFTERWORD

THAT'S WHAT PEOPLE HAVE BEEN REQUESTING IN LETTERS TOO!
THIS TIME WE'RE DOING A PROFILE ON US OR ME-THING!!
SINCE IT'S THE END OF THE VOLUME
HAD TO HAPPEN!
...WN!
WOK
THANK YOU FOR BUYING VOLUME 2 OF UNKNO...
LONG TIME NO SEE!


YOU NEVER HAVE TO MENTION THAT.
THEN I CAN'T SAY IVAN HATES SPOTTED GARDEN EELS!!?
SEE CHAPTER
THIS IS UNBELIEV-ABLE!!!
UNFORTU-NATELY, DUE TO PAGE CONSIDER-ATIONS...
WHAAAT!!? THIS IS THE ONLY BONUS PAGE WE'VE GOT!!? THERE'S NO ROOM FOR PROFILES!!

OOF!
WELL, HOPE TO SEE YOU AGAIN IN THE NEXT VOLUME
AAAARGH!
A WHOLE PAGE WAS WASTED ON THAT OLD MAN'S FRILLY CUFFS!!!
(PREVIOUS PAGE)

Special thanks!
OIKAWA-SAN
TAKAHASHI-SAN
HAKKA-SAN
NARUMI-CHAN
HARLEKIN
SASAI-SAN
NOZAKI-SAN!
I SAID RIGHT LEG IS NEXT!!!!
AND YOU!!!
YOUR BROTHER WOULDN'T ALLOW THIS!!!!!

WHY DON'T YOU GROW IT OUT...?
ULTRA HIGH LEVEL NATURAL PERM

PLANARIAN

OK, HAVE YOU HEARD OF PLANARIA?

PLANARIA?

WHAT IS THAT A DESSERT?! PU

IT'S A HERMAPHRODITIC CREATURE THAT LIVES IN FRESH WATER, SALT WATER, AND PLACES WITH A LOT OF HUMIDITY.

ITS HEAD REALLY LOOKS LIKE THIS.

IT'S OFTEN USED FOR VARIOUS KINDS OF RESEARCH BECAUSE OF ITS REGENERATIVE POWER.

FOR EXAMPLE, IF YOU CUT ONE UP INTO THREE PIECES, EACH PIECE WILL REGROW A NEW BODY.

SQUIRM SQUIRM

INCIDENTALLY, IF YOU CUT ONE LENGTHWISE PART OF THE WAY, IT'LL RESULT IN TWO HEADS

UGH!

THAT'S AWESOME, BUT REALLY GROSS!

SO...

RUSTLE

...THAT'S ENOUGH EXPLAINING...

IT MAY EVEN MAKE YOU STRONGER..

YEAH, RIGHT! I HAD A FEELING SOMETHING LIKE THIS WAS GONNA HAPPEN FROM AROUND THE SECOND PANEL! BUT ANYWAY, CALM DOWN!!!

MY BODY CAN'T DO THAT!!!

UNKNOWN ❷

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